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BIOGRAPHY.

LIFE OF THE REV. WILLIAM TENNENT.

CONTINUED FROM VOL. II. PAGE 320.

THE writer of theſe memoirs was greatly intereſted by theſe uncommon events; and, on a favorable occaſion, earneſtly preſſed Mr. Tennent for a minute account of what his views and apprehenſions were, while he lay in this extraordinary ſtate of ſuſpended animation. He diſcovered great reluctance to enter into any explanation of his perceptions and feelings at this time; but, being importunately urged to do it, he at length conſented, and proceeded with a ſolemnity not to be deſcribed.

"While I was converſing with my brother," ſaid he, "on the ſtate of my ſoul, and the fears I had entertained for my future welfare, I found myſelf, in an inſtant, in another ſtate of exiſtence, under the direction of another being, who ordered me to follow him. I was accordingly wafted along, I know not how, till I beheld at a diſtance an ineffable glory, the impreſſion of which on my mind it is impoſſible to communicate to mortal man. I immediately reflected on my happy change, and thought, Well, bleſſed be God! I am ſafe at laſt, notwithſtanding all my fears. I ſaw an innumerable hoſt of happy beings, ſurrounding the inexpreſſible glory, in acts of adoration and joyous worſhip; but I did not ſee any bodily ſhape or repreſentation in the glorious appearance. I heard things unutterable. I heard their ſongs and hallelujahs, of thankſgiving and praiſe, with unſpeakable rapture. I felt joy unutterable and full of glory.

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I then applied to my conductor, and requested leave to join the happy throng. On which he tapped me on the shoulder, and said, 'You must return to the earth.' This seemed like a sword through my heart. In an instant I recollect to have seen my brother standing before me, disputing with the doctor. The three days, during which I had appeared lifeless, seemed to me not more than ten or twenty minutes. The idea of returning to this world of sorrow and trouble, gave me such a shock, that I fainted repeatedly." He added, "Such was the effect on my mind of what I had seen and heard, that if it be possible for a human being to live entirely above the world and the things of it, for some time afterwards I was that person. The ravishing sounds of the songs and hallelujahs that I heard, and the very words that were uttered, were not out of my ears, when awake, for at least three years. All the kingdoms of the earth were in my sight as nothing and vanity; and so great were my ideas of heavenly glory, that nothing, which did not, in some measure, relate to it, could command my serious attention."

It is not surprising, that after so affecting an account, strong solicitude should have been felt for further information as to the words, or at least the subjects of praise and adoration, which Mr. Tennent had heard. But when he was requested to communicate these, he gave a decided negative, adding, "You will know them, with many other particulars hereafter, as you will find the whole among my papers;" alluding to his intention of leaving the writer hereof his executor, which precluded any further solicitation.*

* *It was so ordered in the course of Divine Providence, that the writer was sorely disappointed in his expectation of obtaining the papers here alluded to. Such, however, was the will of Heaven! Mr. Tennent's death happened during the revolutionary war, when the enemy seperated the writer from him, so as to render it impracticable to attend him on a dying bed; and before it was possible for the writer to get to his house after his death, (the writer being with the American army at the Valley Forge) his son came from Charleston, and took his mother, and his father's papers and property, and returned to Carolina. About 50 miles from Charleston, the son was suddenly taken sick, and died among entire strangers; and never since, though the writer was also left executor to the son, could any trace of the father's papers be discovered by him.*

The pious and candid reader is left to his own reflections on this very extraordinary occurrence. The facts have been ſtated, and they are unqueſtionable. The writer will only aſk, whether it be contrary to revealed truth, or to reaſon, to believe, that in every age of the world inſtances like that which is here recorded, have occurred, to furniſh *living testimony* of the reality of the inviſible world, and of the infinite importance of eternal concerns?

As ſoon as circumſtances would permit, Mr. Tennent was licenſed, and began to preach the everlaſting goſpel with great zeal and ſucceſs. The death of his brother John, who had been ſome time ſettled as miniſter of the Preſbyterian church at Freehold, in the county of Monmouth, New-Jerſey, left that congregation in a deſtitute ſtate.—They had experienced ſo much ſpiritual benefit from the indefatigable labours, and pious zeal of this able miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt, that they ſoon turned their attention to his brother, who was received on trial, and after one year, was found to be no unworthy ſucceſſor to ſo excellent a predeceſſor. In October, 1733, Mr. Tennent was regularly ordained their paſtor, and continued ſo through the whole of a pretty long life; one of the beſt proofs of miniſterial fidelity.

Although his ſalary was but ſmall, (it is thought under 100*l.*) yet the glebe belonging to the church was an excellent plantation, on which he lived, and which, with care and good farming, was capable of maintaing a family with comfort. But his inattention to the things of this world was ſo great, that he left the management of his temporal concerns wholly to a faithful ſervant, in whom he placed great confidence. After a ſhort time he found his worldly affairs were becoming embarraſſed. His ſteward reported to him that he was in debt to the merchant between 20*l.* and 30*l.* and he knew of no means of payment, as the crops had fallen ſhort. Mr. Tennent mentioned this to an intimate friend, a merchant of New-York, who was on a viſit at his houſe. His friend told him, that this mode of life would not do, that he muſt get a wife, to attend to his temporal affairs, and to comfort his leiſure hours by conjugal endearments. He ſmiled at the idea, and aſſured him, it never could be the caſe, unleſs ſome friend would provide one for him, for he knew not how to go about it. His friend told him he was ready to undertake the buſineſs; that he had a ſiſter-in law, an excellent woman, of great piety, a widow, of his own age, and one peculiarly ſuited in all reſpects to

his character and circumſtances. In ſhort, that ſhe was every thing he ought to look for; and if he would go with him to New-York the next day, he would ſettle the negociation for him. To this he ſoon aſſented. The next evening found him in that city, and before noon, the day after, he was introduced to Mrs. Noble. He was much pleaſed with her appearance; and, when left alone with her, abruptly told her, that he ſuppoſed her brother had informed her of his errand; that neither his time nor inclination would ſuffer him to uſe much ceremony; but that if ſhe approved the meaſure he would attend his charge on the next Sabbath, and return on Monday, be married and immediately take her home. The lady, with ſome heſitation and difficulty, at laſt conſented, being convinced that his ſituation and circumſtances rendered it proper. Thus, in one week, ſhe found herſelf miſtreſs of his houſe. She proved a moſt invaluable treaſure to him, more than anſwering every thing ſaid of her by an affectionate brother. She took the care of his temporal concerns upon her, extricated him from debt, and, by a happy union of prudence and economy, ſo managed all his worldly buſineſs, that in a few years his circumſtances became eaſy and comfortable. In a word, in her was literally fulfilled the declaration of Solomon, that 'a virtuous woman is a crown to her huſband, and that her price is far above rubies.' Beſides ſeveral children who died in infancy, he had by her three ſons, who attained the age of manhood; John, who ſtudied phyſic, and died in the Weſt-Indies when about thirty years of age; William, a man of ſuperior character, and miniſter of the Independent church in Charleſton, South-Carolina, who died the latter end of September or beginning of October, A. D. 1777, about thirty-ſeven years old; and Gilbert, who alſo practiſed phyſic, and died at Freehold before his father, aged 28 years. Few parents could boaſt three ſons of a more manly or handſome appearance; and the father gave them the moſt liberal education that the country could afford.

Mr. Tennent's inattention to earthly things continued till his eldeſt ſon was about three years old, when he led him out into the fields on a Lord's day after public worſhip.—The deſign of the walk was for religious meditation. As he went along, accidentally caſting his eye on the child, a thought ſuddenly ſtruck him, and he aſked himſelf this queſtion: "Should God in his providence take me hence, what would become of this child and its mother, for whom I have never taken any perſonal care to make proviſion? How can

I anſwer this negligence to God and to them?" The impropriety of his inattention to the relative duties of life, which God had called him to; and the conſideration of the ſacred declaration, 'that he who does not provide for his own houſhold, has denied the faith and is worſe than an infidel,' had ſuch an impreſſive effect on his mind, that it almoſt deprived him of his ſenſes. He ſaw his conduct, which before he thought aroſe entirely from a deep ſenſe of divine things, in a point of light in which he never before had viewed it. He immediately attempted to return home, but ſo great was his diſtreſs, that it was with difficulty he could get along; till, all at once, he was relieved by ſuddenly recurring to that text of Scripture, which came into his mind with extraordinary force. 'But unto the tribe of Levi Moſes gave not any inheritance, the Lord God of Iſrael was their inheritance.' Such, however, was the effect of this unexpected ſcene on Mr, Tennent's mind and judgment, that ever afterwards he prudently attended to the temporal buſineſs of life, ſtill, however, in perfect ſubordination to the great things of eternity, and became fully convinced that God was to be faithfully ſerved, as well by diſcharging relative duties in his love and fear, as by the more immediate acts of devotion. He clearly perceived, that every duty had its proper time and place, as well as motive; that we had a right, and were called of God, to eat and drink, and to be properly clothed; and of courſe that care ſhould be taken to procure thoſe things, provided that all be done to the glory of God. In the duties of a goſpel miniſter, however, eſpecially as they related to his paſtoral charge, he ſtill engaged with the utmoſt zeal and faithfulneſs; and was eſteemed by all ranks and degrees, as far as his labours extended, as a fervent, uſeful, and ſucceſsful preacher of the goſpel.

His judgment of mankind was ſuch, as to give him a marked ſuperiority, in this reſpect, over his contemporaries, and greatly aided him in his miniſterial functions. He was ſcarcely ever miſtaken in the character of a man with whom he converſed, though it was but for a few hours. He had an independant mind, which was ſeldom ſatisfied on important ſubjects without the beſt evidence that was to be had. His manner was remarkably impreſſive; and his ſermons, although ſeldom poliſhed, were generally delivered with ſuch indeſcribable power, that he was truly an able and ſucceſsful miniſter of the New Teſtament. He could ſay things from the pulpit, which, if ſaid by almoſt any other

man, would have been thought a violation of propriety.—But by him they were delivered in a manner ſo peculiar to himſelf, and ſo extremely impreſſive, that they ſeldom failed to pleaſe and to inſtruct. As an inſtance of this, the following anecdote is given, of the truth of which the writer was a witneſs.

Mr. Tennent was paſſing through a town in the ſtate of New Jerſey, in which he was a ſtranger, and had never preached, and ſtopping at a friends houſe to dine, was informed, that it was a day of faſting and prayer in the congregation, on account of a very remarkable and ſevere drought, which threatened the moſt dangerous conſequences to the fruits of the earth. His friend had juſt returned from church, and the intermiſſion was but half an hour.—Mr. Tennent was requeſted to preach, and with great difficulty conſented, as he wiſhed to proceed on his journey.—At church the people were ſurpriſed to ſee a preacher, wholly unknown to them, and entirely unexpected, aſcend the pulpit. His whole appearance, being in a travelling dreſs, covered with duſt, wearing an oldfaſhioned large wig, diſcoloured like his clothes, and a long meagre viſage, engaged their attention, and excited their curioſity. On his riſing up, inſtead of beginning to pray, as was the uſual practice, he looked around the congregation, with a piercing eye and earneſt attention, and after a minute's profound ſilence, he addreſſed them with great ſolemnity in the following words: "My beloved brethren! I am told you have come here to-day to faſt and pray; a very good work indeed, provided you have come with a ſincere deſire to glorify God thereby. But if your deſign is merely to comply with a cuſtomary practice, or with the wiſh of your church officers, you are guilty of the greateſt folly imaginable, as you had much better have ſtaid at home, and earned your three ſhillings and ſixpence.* But if your minds are indeed impreſſed with the ſolemnity of the occaſion, and you are really deſirous of humbling yourſelves before Almighty God, your heavenly Father, come, join with me and let us pray." This had an effect ſo uncommon and extraordinary on the congregation, that the utmoſt ſerioufneſs was univerſally manifeſted. The prayer and the ſermon added greatly to the impreſſions already made, and tended to rouſe the attention, influence the mind, command the affections, and increaſe the temper, which had been ſo happily produ-

* *At that time the stated price for a days labor.*

eed. Many had reaſon to bleſs God for this unexpected viſit, and to reckon this day one of the happieſt of their lives.

While on this ſubject, we may introduce another anecdote of this wonderful man, to ſhow the dealings of God with him, and the deep contemplations of his mind. He was attending the duties of the Lord's day in his own congregation as uſual, where the cuſtom was to have morning and evening ſervice with only a half hour's intermiſſion to relieve the attention. He had preached in the morning, and in the intermiſſion had walked into the woods for meditation, the weather being warm. He was reflecting on the infinite wiſdom of God, as manifeſted in all his works, and particularly in the wonderful method of ſalvation, through the death and ſufferings of his beloved Son. This ſubject ſuddenly opened on his mind with ſuch a flood of light, that his views of the glory, and the infinite majeſty of Jehovah, were ſo inexpreſſibly great, as entirely to overwhelm him, and he fell almoſt lifeleſs, to the ground. When he had revived a little, all he could do was to raiſe a fervent prayer, that God would withdraw himſelf from him, or that he muſt periſh under a view of his ineffable glory. When able to reflect on his ſituation, he could not but abhor himſelf as a weak and deſpicable worm, and ſeemed to be overcome with aſtoniſhment, that a creature ſo unworthy and inſufficient, had ever dared to attempt the inſtruction of his fellow men in the nature and attributes of ſo glorious a Being. Overſtaying his uſual time, ſome of his elders went in ſearch of him, and found him proſtrate on the ground, unable to riſe, and incapable of informing them of the cauſe. They raiſed him up, and after ſome time brought him to the church, and ſupported him to the pulpit, which he aſcended on his hands and knees, to the no ſmall aſtoniſhment of the congregation. He remained ſilent a conſiderable time, earneſtly ſupplicating Almighty God (as he told the writer) to hide himſelf from him, that he might be enabled to addreſs his people, who were by this time loſt in wonder to know what had produced this uncommon event. His prayers were heard, and he became able to ſtand up, by holding to the deſk. He now began the moſt affecting and pathetic addreſs, that the congregation had ever received from him. He gave a ſurpriſing account of the views he had, of the infinite wiſdom of God, and greatly deplored his own incapacity to ſpeak to them concerning a Being ſo infinitely glorious beyond all his powers of deſcription. He attempted to ſhow ſomething of what had been diſcovered to him

of the aſtoniſhing wiſdom of Jehovah, of which it was impoſſible for human nature to form adequate conceptions: He then broke out into ſo fervent and expreſſive a prayer, as greatly to ſurpriſe the congregation, and draw tears from every eye. A ſermon followed, that continued the ſolemn ſcene, and made very laſting impreſſions on all the hearers.

The great increaſe of communicants in his church was a good evidence of his paſtoral care and powerful preaching, as it exceeded that of moſt churches in the ſynod. But his labours were not confined to the pulpit. He was indefatigable in his endeavours to communicate in private families a ſavour of the knowledge of ſpiritual and divine things. In his parochial viſits he uſed regularly to go through his congregation in order ſo as to carry the unſearchable riches of Chriſt to every houſe. He earneſtly preſſed it on the conſcience of parents to inſtruct their children at home by plain and eaſy queſtions, ſo as gradually to expand their young minds, and prepare them for the reception of the more practical doctrines of the goſpel. In this, Mr. Tennent has preſented an excellent example to his brethren in the miniſtry; for certain it is, that more good may be done in a congregation, by this domeſtic mode of inſtruction, than any one can imagine, who has not made the trial. Children and ſervants are in this way prepared for the teachings of the ſanctuary, and to reap the full benefit of the word publicly preached. He made it a practice in all theſe viſits to enforce practical religion on all, high and low, rich and poor, young and old, maſter and ſervant. To this he was particularly attentive, it being a favourite obſervation with him, "that he loved a religion that a man could live by."

Mr. Tennent carefully avoided the diſcuſſion of controverſial ſubjects, unleſs ſpecially called to it by particular circumſtances, and then he was ever ready to aſſign the reaſon of his faith. The following occurrence will ſhow the general ſtate of his mind and feelings in regard to ſuch ſubjects. A couple of young clergymen, viſiting at his houſe, entered into a diſpute on the queſtion, at that time much controverted in New-England, whether faith or repentance were firſt in order, in the converſion of a ſinner. Not being able to determine the point, they agreed to make Mr. Tennent their umpire, and to diſpute the ſubject at length before him. He accepted the propoſal, and after a ſolemn debate for ſome time, his opinion being aſked, he very gravely took his pipe from his mouth, looked out of his window,

pointed to a man ploughing on a hill at ſome diſtance, and aſked the young clergymen if they knew that man: on their anſwering in the negative, he told them it was one of his elders, who to his full conviction, had been a ſincere Chriſtian for more than thirty years. "Now," ſaid Mr. Tennent, "aſk him, whether faith or repentance came firſt, what do you think he would ſay?" They ſaid they could not tell. "Then," ſays he, "I will tell you: he would ſay that he cared not, which came firſt, but that he had got them both. Now, my friends," he added, "be careful that you have both a true faith, and a ſincere repentance, and do not be greatly troubled, which comes firſt." It is not however, to be ſuppoſed by this, that Mr. Tennent was unfriendly to a deep and accurate examination of all important theological doctrines. There were few men more earneſt than he to have young clergymen well inſtructed and thoroughly furniſhed for their work. This indeed was an object on which his heart was much ſet, and which he exerted himſelf greatly to promote.

Mr. Tennent was remarkably diſtinguiſhed for a pointed attention to the particular circumſtances and ſituation of the afflicted, either in body or mind, and would viſit them with as much care and attention as a phyſician, and frequently indeed proved an able one, to both ſoul and body. But his greateſt talent was that of a peace-maker, which he poſſeſſed in ſo eminent a degree, that probably none have exceeded, and very few have equalled him in it. He was ſent for, far and near, to ſettle diſputes, and heal difficulties, which aroſe in congregations; and happily for thoſe concerned, he was generally ſucceſsful. Indeed, he ſeldom would relinquiſh his object till he had accompliſhed it.

But while this man of God was thus ſucceſsful in promoting the beſt intereſts of his fellow-creatures, and in advancing the glory of his Lord and Maſter, the great enemy of mankind was not likely to obſerve the deſtruction of his kingdom without making an effort to prevent it. As he aſſailed our bleſſed Saviour in the days of his fleſh with all his art and all his power, ſo has he always made the faithful followers of the Redeemer the objects of his inveterate malice. If the good man, of whom we write, was greatly honoured by peculiar communications from on high, he was alſo very often the ſubject of the ſevere buffetings of that malignant and fallen ſpirit.

The time of which we are now ſpeaking was remarkable for a great revival of religion, in which Mr. Tennent was

conſiderably inſtrumental, and in which a Mr. David Rowland, brought up with Mr. Tennent at the Log-College, was alſo very remarkable for his ſucceſsful preaching among all ranks of people.* Poſſeſſing a commanding eloquence, as well as other eſtimable qualities, he became very popular, and was much celebrated throughout the country. His celebrity and ſucceſs were ſubjects of very ſerious regret to many careleſs worldings, who placed all their happineſs in the enjoyment of temporal objects, and conſidered, and repreſented Mr. Rowland and his brethren as fanatics and hypocrites. This was ſpecially applicable to many of the great men of the then province of New-Jerſey, and particularly to the chief juſtice who was well known for his diſbelief of Revelation. There was at this time, prowling through the country, a noted man ov the name of Tom Bell, whoſe knowledge and underſtanding were very conſiderable, and who greatly excelled in low art and cunning. His mind was totally debaſed, and his whole conduct betrayed a ſoul capable of deſcending to every ſpecies of iniquity. In all the arts of theft, robbery, fraud, deception, and defamation, he was ſo deeply ſkilled, and ſo thoroughly practiſed, that it is believed, he never had his equal in this country. He had been indicted in almoſt every one of the middle colonies; but his ingenuity and cunning always enabled him to eſcape puniſhment. This man unhappily reſembled Mr. Rowland in his external appearance, ſo as hardly to be known from him, without the moſt careful examination.

It ſo happened, that Tom Bell arrived one evening, at a tavern, in Pinceton, dreſſed in a dark, parſon's gray frock. On his entering the tavern about duſk, the late John Stockton, Eſq. of that town, a pious and reſpectable man to whom Mr. Rowland was well known, went up to Bell, and addreſſed him as Mr. Rowland, and was inviting him to go home with him. Bell aſſured him of his miſtake. It was with ſome difficulty that Mr. Stockton acknowledged his error, and then informed Bell, that it had ariſen from his great reſemblance to Mr. Rowland. This hint was ſufficient for the prolific genius of that notorious impoſter. The next day, Bell went into the county of Hunterdon, and ſtopped in a congregation where Mr. Rowland had formerly preached once or twice, but where he was not intimately known. Here he met with a member of the congregation, to whom he introduced himſelf as the Rev. Mr. Rowland,

* It was not far from A. D. 1744.

who had preached to them ſome time before. This gentleman immediately invited him to his houſe, to ſpend the week; and begged him, as the people were without a miniſter, to preach for them on the next Sabbath, to which Bell agreed, and notice was accordingly given to the neighbourhood. The impoſtor was treated with every mark of attention and reſpect; and a private room was aſſigned to him, as a ſtudy, to prepare for the Sabbath. The ſacred day arrived, and he was invited to ride to church with the ladies in the family waggon, and the maſter of the houſe accompanied them on an elegant horſe. When they had arrived near the church, Bell on a ſudden diſcovered, that he had left his notes in his ſtudy, and propoſed to ride back for them on the fine horſe, by which means he ſhould be able to return in time for the ſervice. This propoſal was inſtantly agreed to, and Bell mounted the horſe, returned to the houſe, rifled the deſk of his hoſt, and made off with the horſe. Wherever he ſtopped, he called himſelf the Rev. David Rowland.

At the time this event took place, Meſſrs. Tennent and Rowland had gone into Pennſylvania or Maryland, with Mr. Joſhua Anderſon and Mr. Benjamin Stevens, (both members of a church contiguous to that where Bell had practiſed his fraud) on buſineſs of a religious nature. Soon after their return Mr. Rowland was charged with the above robbery; he gave bonds to appear at the court at Trenton, and the affair made a great noiſe throughout the colony. At the court of oyer and terminer, the judge charged the grand jury on the ſubject with great ſeverity. After long conſideration, the jury returned into court without finding a bill. The judge reproved them, in an angry manner, and ordered them out again. They again returned without finding a bill, and were again ſent out with threatenings of ſevere puniſhment if they perſiſted in their refuſal. At laſt they agreed, and brought in a bill for the alledged crime. On the trial, Meſſrs. Tennent, Anderſon, and Stevens appeared as witneſſes, and fully proved an *alibi* in favour of Mr. Rowland, by ſwearing that on the very day on which the robbery was committed, they were with Mr. Rowland, and heard him preach, in Pennſylvania or Maryland. The jury, accordingly, acquitted him without heſitation, to the great diſappointment and mortification of his proſecutors, and of many other enemies to the great revival of religion that had recently taken place; but to the great joy of the ſerious and well diſpoſed. The ſpirits hoſtile to the ſpread

of the gospel were not, however, so easily overcome. In their view, an opportunity was now presented, favourable to inflict a deep wound on the cause of Christianity; and, as if urged on by the malice of man's great enemy, they resolved that no means should be left untried, no arts unemployed, for the destruction of these distinguished servants of God. Many and various were the circumstances which still contributed to inspire them with hopes of success. The testimony of the person who had been robbed was positive that Mr. Rowland was the robber: and this testimony was coroborated by that of a number of individuals, who had seen Tom Bell personating Mr. Rowland, using his name, and in possession of the horse. These sons of Belial had been able, after great industry used for the purpose, to collect a a mass of evidence of this kind, which they considered as establishing the fact; but Mr. Rowland, was now out of their power by the virdict of *not guilty*. Their vengeance, therefore, was directed against the witnesses, by whose testimony he had been cleared; and they were accordingly arraigned for perjury before a court of quarter sessions in the county; and the grand jury received a strict charge, the plain import of which was, that these men ought to be indicted. After an examination of the testimony on one side only, as is the custom in such cases, the grand jury did accordingly find bills of indictment against Messrs. Tennent, Anderson and Stevens, for wilful and corrupt perjury. Their enemies, and the enemies of the gospel, now began to triumph. They gloried in the belief, that an indeliable stain would be fixed upon the professors of religion; and that this *new light*, by which they denominated all appearance of piety, would soon be extinguished forever.

These indictments were removed to the supreme court; and poor Mr. Anderson, living in the county, and conscious of his entire innocence, could not brook the idea of lying under the odium of the hateful crime of perjury, and demanded a trial at the first court of oyer and terminer. This proved most seriously injurious to him, for he was pronounced guilty, and most cruelly and unjustly condemned to stand one hour on the court house steps, with a paper on his breast, whereon was written, in large letters, "This is for wilful and corrupt perjury;" which sentence was executed upon him.

Messrs. Tennent and Stevens were summoned to appear at the next court; and attended accordingly, depending on the aid of Mr. John Coxe, an eminent lawyer, who had been previously employed to conduct their defence. As Mr.

Tennent was wholly unacquainted with the nature of forenſic litigation, and did not know of any perſon living who could prove his innocence, (all the perſons who were with him being indicted) his only reſource and conſolation was to commit himſelf to the Divine will, and if he muſt ſuffer, to take it as from the hand of God, who, he well knew, could make even the wrath of man to praiſe him; and conſidering it as probable that he might ſuffer, he had prepared a ſermon to be preached from the pillory, if that ſhould be his fate. On his arrival at Trenton, he found the famous Mr. Smith of New York, father of the late chief juſtice of Canada, one of the ableſt lawyers in America, and of a religious character, who had voluntarily attended to aid in his defence; alſo his brother Gilbert, who was now ſettled in the paſtoral charge of the ſecond Preſbyterian church in Philadelphia, and who had brought Mr. John Kinſey, one of the firſt counſellors of that city, for the ſame purpoſe.—Meſſrs. Tennent and Stevens met theſe gentlemen, at Mr. Coxe's the morning before the trial was to come on. Mr. Coxe requeſted that they would bring in their witneſſes, that they might examine them previouſly to their going into court. Mr. Tennent anſwered, that he did not know of any witneſſes but God and his own conſcience. Mr. Coxe replied, "If you have no witneſſes, Sir, the trial muſt be put off, otherwiſe you moſt certainly will be convicted. You well know the ſtrong teſtimony that will be brought againſt you, and the exertions that are making to accompliſh your ruin." Mr. Tennent replied, "I am ſenſible of all this, yet it never ſhall be ſaid that I have delayed the trial, or been afraid to meet the juſtice of my country. I know my own innocence, and that God, whoſe I am, and whom I ſerve, will never ſuffer me to fall by theſe ſnares of the devil, or by the wicked machinations of his agents or ſervants. Therefore, gentlemen, go on to the trial." Meſſrs. Smith and Kinſey, who were both religious men, told him that his confidence and truſt in God as a Chriſtian miniſter of the goſpel, was well founded, and before a heavenly tribunal would be all important to him; but aſſured him it would not avail in an earthly court, and urged his conſent to put off the trial. Mr. Tennent continued inflexible in his refuſal; on which Mr. Coxe told him that, ſince he was determined to go to trial, he had the ſatisfaction of informing him, that they had diſcovered a flaw in the indictment, which might prove favourable to him on a demurrer. He aſked for an explanation, and on finding that it was to admit the fact in a

legal point of view, and reſt on the law ariſing from it, Mr. Tennent broke out with great vehemence, ſaying, that this was another ſnare of the devil, and before he would conſent to it he would ſuffer death. He aſſured his counſel that his confidence in God was ſo ſtrong, and his aſſurance that he would bring about his deliverance in ſome way or other, was ſo great, that he did not wiſh them to delay the trial for a moment.

Mr. Stevens, whoſe faith was not of this deſcription, and who was bowed down to the ground under the moſt gloomy apprehenſions of ſuffering, as his neighbour Mr. Anderſon had done, eagerly ſeized the opportunity of eſcape that was offered, and was afterwards diſcharged on the exception.

Mr. Coxe ſtill urged putting off the trial, charging Mr. Tennent with acting the part rather of a wild enthuſiaſt, than of a meek and prudent Chriſtian; but he inſiſted that they ſhould proceed, and left them in aſtoniſhment, not knowing how to act, when the bell ſummoned them to court.

Mr. Tennent had not walked far in the ſtreet, before he met a man and his wife, who ſtopped him, and aſked if his name was not Tennent. He anſwered in the affirmative, and begged to know if they had any buſineſs with him.—The man replied, "You beſt know." He told his name, and ſaid that he was from a certain place (which he mentioned) in Pennſylvania or Maryland; that Meſſrs. Rowland, Tennent, Anderſon, and Stevens had lodged either at his houſe, or in a houſe wherein he and his wife had been ſervants, (it is not now certain which) at a particular time, which he named; that on the following day they had heard Meſſrs. Tennent and Rowland preach; that ſome nights before they left home, he and his wife waked out of a ſound ſleep, and each told the other a dream, which had juſt occurred, and which proved to be the ſame in ſubſtance, to wit, that he, Mr. Tennent was at Trenton, in the greateſt poſſible diſtreſs, and that it was in their power, and theirs only, to relieve him. Conſidering it as a remarkable dream only, they again went to ſleep, and it was twice repeated preciſely in the ſame manner to both of them. This made ſo deep an impreſſion on their minds, that they ſet off, and here they were, and would know of him what they were to do. Mr. Tennent immediately went with them to the court houſe, and his counſel on examining the man and his wife, and finding their teſtimony to be full to the purpoſe, were, as they well might be, in perfect aſtoniſhment. Be-

fore the trial began, another perſon, of a low character, called on Mr. Tennent, and told him that he was ſo haraſſed in conſcience, for the part he had been acting in this proſecution, that he could get no reſt till he had determined to come and make a full confeſſion. He ſent this man to his counſel alſo. Soon after, Mr. Stockton from Princeton appeared, and added his teſtimony. In ſhort, they went to trial, and notwithſtanding the utmoſt exertions of the ableſt counſel, who had been employed to aid the Attorney-General againſt Mr. Tennent, the advocates on his ſide ſo traced every movement of the defendant on the Saturday, Sunday, and Monday in queſtion, and ſatisfied the jury ſo perfectly on the ſubject, that they did not heſitate honourably to acquit Mr. Tennent, by their unanimous verdict of *not guilty*, to the great confuſion and mortification of his numerous oppoſers. Mr. Tennent aſſured the writer of this, that during the whole of this buſineſs, his ſpirits never failed him, and that he contemplated the poſſibility of his ſuffering ſo infamous a puniſhment, as ſtanding in the pillory, without diſmay, and had made preparation, and was fully determined, to deliver a ſermon to the people in that ſituation, if he ſhould be placed in it.

He went from Trenton to Philadelphia with his brother, and on his return, as he was riſing the hill at the entrance of Trenton, without reflecting on what had happened, he accidently caſt his eyes on the pillory, which ſuddenly ſo filled him with horror, as completely to unman him, and it was with great difficulty that he kept himſelf from falling from his horſe. He reached the tavern door in conſiderable danger, was obliged to he aſſiſted to diſmount, and it was ſome time before he could ſo get the better of his fears and confuſſion, as to proceed on his journey. Such is the conſtitution of the human mind! It will often reſiſt, with unſhaken firmneſs the ſevereſt external preſſure and violence; and ſometimes it yields without reaſon, when it has nothing to fear. Or, ſhould we not rather ſay, ſuch is the ſupport which God ſometimes affords to his people in the time of their neceſſity, and ſuch the manner in which he leaves them to feel their own weakneſs when that neceſſity is paſt, that all the praiſe may be given where alone it is due.

The writer ſincerely rejoices, that though a number of the extraordinary incidents in the life of Mr. Tennent cannot be vouched by public teſtimony and authentic documents, yet the ſingular manner in which a gracious God did appear for this his faithful ſervant in the time of that

diſtreſs, which has juſt been noticed, is a matter of public notoriety, and capable of being verified by the moſt unqueſtionable teſtimony and records.

This ſpecial inſtance of the interference of the righteous Judge of all the earth ought to yield conſolation to pious people in ſeaſons of great difficulty and diſtreſs, where there is none that ſeems able to deliver them. Yet it ought to afford no encouragement to the enthuſiaſt, who refuſes to uſe the means of preſervation and deliverance, which God puts in his power. True confidence in God is always accompanied with the uſe of all lawful means, and with the rejection of all that are unlawful. It conſiſts in an unſhaken belief, that while right means are uſed, God will give that iſſue, which ſhall be moſt for his glory and his people's good. The extraordinary occurrence here recorded, may alſo ſerve as a ſolemn warning to the enemies of God's people, and to the advocates of infidelity, not to ſtrive by wicked and deep laid machinations to oppoſe the ſucceſs of the goſpel, nor to attempt to injure the perſons and characters of thoſe faithful ſervants of the Moſt High, whom ſooner or later he will vindicate to the unſpeakable confuſion of all, who have perſecuted and traduced them.

To be concluded in the next number.

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THE LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER.

CONTINUED FROM VOL. II. PAGE 262.

A CONCLAVE of the cardinals having examined Luther's writings, condemned forty-one propoſitions taken out of them; and the pope publiſhed a ſevere bull in June, 1520, declaring thoſe propoſitions falſe, ſcandalous, and heretical. While Eckius, the mortal enemy of Luther, was commiſſioned to put the bull in execution in Germany. Luther's books were publickly burnt in conſequence of it; and in return, he alſo publickly burnt the pope's bull at Wittenberg, which he called the execrable bull of Antichriſt. But they were not content with burning Luther's writings; they made uſe of all their intereſt with Charles the fifth, who was crowned Emperor in 1520, to proceed againſt Luther. And accordingly a diet was appointed to be held at Worms, in January, 1521. The diet reſolved, that Luther ſhould be ſummoned to appear, under the ſanction of a ſafe conduct, which was granted him by the Emperor, who ſent

proper perſons to attend him; with a private letter directed, "To the honourable, beloved, devout, "Dr. Martin Luther, of the order of St. Auguſtine." Luther's friends were uneaſy for him; The mournful end of John Huſs in 1415, at Conſtanee recurred to them; They diſſuaded him from going, when he made that ever memorable reply, "I am determined to enter the city in the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, though as many devils ſhould oppoſe me, as there are tiles upon the houſes at Worms." He was accompanied from Wittenberg, by ſome divines, and one hundred horſe; but he took only eight horſemen into Worms, where he arrived on the ſixteenth of April: And when he ſtept out of the coach he ſaid, "God ſhall be on my ſide," in the preſence of a great multitude, whom curioſity had ſummoned to ſee ſo remarkable a perſon.

Luther was treated with great reſpect, and viſited, in the apartments appointed for him, by many princes, nobles, and divines. The next day he appeared before the very auguſt diet: Eckius, as *prolocutor*, was ordered to aſk "Whether he owned thoſe books, that bore his name; and "Whether he would retract or maintain what was contained in them." Luther replied, with great reſpect, that, as "the point in debate was of the higheſt conſequence, he deſired time to give in a proper reply, without prejudice to the word of God, or of his own ſoul. The emperor granted him a day to conſider the matter: While as he returned from the diet his friends on all hands adviſed and exhorted him, "not to fear thoſe who could only kill the body—"And when thou art before Kings, think not what thou ſhalt ſpeak, for it ſhall be given to thee in that hour.

But Luther had too much ſenſe and knowledge of the Scripture to arrogate to himſelf an apoſtolical promiſe: He prepared therefore with all precaution and prudence for the enſuing day. When the queſtions being propoſed as before; he replied, with a becoming modeſty, and deference, that "the books which bore his name, were written by him, ſaving what might be interpolated or added, by evil and deſigning men: He acknowledged his genuine writings. He proteſted, that all he had written, was with a view to the glory of God, and the inſtruction of the faithful. But deſired the aſſemby to conſider, that his books were of three kinds: That in ſome he treated only of piety and morality, in ſuch a plain and evangelical manner, that his adverſaries acknowledged, they were innocent, profitable, and worthy to be read by all Chriſtians. That in others he had written

againſt popery, which he could by no means retract, ſince, by ſo doing, he ſhould give force to thoſe horrid errors and abuſes, which already had too much defiled the Chriſtian world. In a third ſort, he had written againſt thoſe private perſons, who had oppoſed the truths which he taught. "In theſe, I confeſs, ſaid he, I have ſometimes been more ſevere than I ought. For I do not profeſs myſelf a ſaint, nor do I diſpute concerning my own life, but concerning the doctrine of Chriſt. As I am a man I may err, and therefore moſt humbly declare, that if any man, high or low, will convince me of my error, by plain ſcripture, I am ready to revoke it, and burn my writings." Eckius paſſionately ſaid that he had not anſwered the queſtion; and inſiſted that he ſhould give a plain and direct anſwer, 'Whether he would retract or not.' Luther replied, that "He was not obliged to believe the pope or his councils, becauſe they erred in many things, and contradicted themſelves, that his belief was ſo far ſettled by the texts of ſcripture, and his conſcience engaged by the word of God, that he neither could nor would retract any thing; becauſe it was neither ſafe nor innocent for a man to act againſt his conſcience." Another attempt being made to urge him to retract, he beſought the Emperor, not to urge him to any ſuch matter, that he could ſay no more than he had before ſaid.—After this he was diſmiſſed from the aſſembly, and as he he paſſed along, was treated with no ſmall contempt and mockery.

The emperor, at another meeting of the diet, propoſed proſcribing Luther, and all his adherents. This was very long and warmly debated, but came to nothing. The Romiſh clergy began to inſinuate that "Faith was not to be kept with heretics," and to adviſe the emperor to revoke the ſafe conduct he had granted to Luther—But he made this generous reply, that if no faith was to be found in the reſt of the world, it ought at leaſt to be ſeen in a Roman emperor." Many great perſonages conferred privately with Luther; while he conſtantly declared that he was reſolved to die rather than recede from the word of God.

At length on the 26th of April, the emperor ordered Luther to depart immediately from Worms, under a ſafe conduct for twenty one days. The elector of Saxony, imagining that a very ſevere edict would be publiſhed againſt Luther, and being determined to protect him, ordered a troop of horſemen masked, to ſeize Luther in his return from Worms; which accordingly was done, and he was conveyed as if by violence, to the caſtle of Wartburgh, near Eiſenach,

where the elector concealed him fourteen months. Luther called this retreat his Patmos: His enemies were ſolicitous, and employed reputed wizards to find him out; while many of his friends, who were not in the ſecret, had very uneaſy apprehenſions.

As the elector imagined, ſo it happened. A ſevere edict was publiſhed by the emperor on the 29th of May; wherein he declared, that it was his duty to extinguiſh hereſies; "that Luther was a ſchiſmatic, and heretic; that the ſentence of the pope ſhould be put in execution againſt him; and that no perſon ſhould defend or protect him, under the penalty of high treaſon, and being put to the bar of the empire."—This edict was penned by another rancorous enemy of Luther's, Alexander; and ſo replete with criminations was it, that nothing has even urged againſt him, which may not be found in this edict—Luther gained high applauſe, by his behaviour at Worms, and was treated there with much reſpect. His preſence of mind and intrepidity were noble in the opinion of every one but himſelf; for he afterwards lamented, that he had not been bolder in the cauſe of God. Though he is ſaid to have had as much courage as Alexander and Julius Cæſar put together.

While he was in the caſtle at Wartburg, he wrote ſeveral excellent pieces; and in many letters to his friends, declared his ſtrong affiance in God, his diſtaſte of controverſy, his inward trials, and his earneſt wiſh to conclude his days in peace. But alas, ſo far was he from obtaining this peace, that he afterwards was engaged deeper in controverſy than ever; and in the worſt controverſy, amongſt the reformed themſelves, reſpecting the ſacrament, and other doctrinal points, wherein Luther ſhewed more acrimony than uſual, and dipt his pen deeper in gall, than on any former occaſion.

Weary of his confinement, in March 1522, Luther returned to Wittenberg; his doctrine now ſpread far and wide: Henry the Eighth of England wrote againſt him; and Luther replied, though not in a very courtier-like ſtrain. The pope honoured Henry with the title of Defender of the Faith, for his good endeavours. Pope Adrian who was a man of ſevere life, ſucceeded Leo the Tenth. He ſent his nuncio to another diet, ſummoned at Nuremberg, in 1522; and ordered him to declare, that "if the peſtiferous canker (Luther's doctrine) could not be cured with gentle medicines, ſharper ſalves muſt be proved, and fiery ſearings: The putrified members muſt be cut off from the body, leſt the

ſound parts ſhould be infected." At the ſame time, the nuncio was commiſſioned to add; that "God ſuffered this perſecution to be inflicted on his church, for the ſins of men, eſpecially of prieſts and prelates, of the clergy." Reflections which the cardinals in the aſſembly ſtrongly reſented, and which it is imagined ſhortened the life of Adrian.

Luther employed himſelf amidſt the ſtorms, in publiſhing many other pieces, but principally in tranſlating the ſacred ſcriptures; in which he had good ſucceſs, and performed a very acceptable ſervice to truth and religion.— He uſed all his efforts for ſuppreſſing monaſtic orders; he compoſed a new form for celebrating the communion, and gave it in both kinds. Zuinglius diſſented from him in ſome points; and a bitter controverſy enſued between them. In conſequence of the diet at Nuremberg, an edict was again publiſhed; but both Papiſts and Lutherians interpreted it in their own favour. Unhappy confuſions aroſe in Germany by means of the peaſants, who became rebellious: Theſe evils were attributed to Lutherianiſm, though evidently of a civil nature: More than a hundred thouſand of them were killed, before they could be reduced to duty.— The Anabaptiſts too ſprung up, and committed many groſs abſurdities. Luther acted with great prudence and conſtancy, amidſt all theſe perplexities, and wrote ſeveral excellent treatiſes, ſuitable to the occaſions, which gave a noble idea of his probity, plain dealing and good ſenſe.

Eraſmus had long been ſolicited by the papiſts to employ his fine pen againſt Luther. The caution of Eraſmus would not ſuffer him to ſpeak out, otherwiſe he ſeems to have had no better opinion of the church of Rome than Luther. He wiſhed however for more moderate meaſures; not conſidering that the times would by no means admit of ſuch meaſures. At length he entered into the controverſy, but choſe a topic, (concerning *free will*) wherein what he offered concluded as ſtrongly againſt many of the firſt Catholic writers as againſt Luther. He ſhewed herein great addreſs and ſagacity. Luther was no ſtranger to the character and merits of Eraſmus. He anſwered his book, and the controverſy was kept up for ſome time.

In 1524 Luther laid aſide the friars habit, and married Catharine Bore, a lady of noble deſcent; who with eight other ladies had been taken out of a nunnery in 1523.— She was twenty-ſix years old; handſome and modeſt: And though Luther confeſſed not without faults, yet leſs faulty, he believed, than moſt other women; and when ſhe bore

him a ſon, he ſaid he would not change his condition for the kingdom of Cræſus. He declared, that he took a wife, to put the notorious and ſcandalous celibacy of the Papiſts to ſhame. He was a ſtrong advocate for matrimony, and the ſtronger doubtleſs, from his knowledge of the ſhocking crimes practiſed in monaſteries and nunneries. He uſed to ſay, if he were upon his death-bed, he would take a wife to ſhame thoſe infamous proceedings. Marriage ſoon after became a recommendation amongſt the reformed; and if a converted miniſter did not marry, he cauſed a ſuſpicion, that he had not renounced the doctrine of celibacy.

Luther was perſuaded to write a letter of apology to Henry the Eighth, for the rough anſwer, he had publiſhed to his book. But Henry replied to him in a very haughty manner, which cauſed Luther, who had a ſpirit equal to Henry, to declare publickly that he was ſorry he had demeaned himſelf ſo far.

The diſturbances in Germany daily increaſed: Another diet was held at Spires, in 1526. But nothing was determined. The Emperor was engaged about this time in a war with the pope, whom he took priſoner, and plundered Rome. However, in 1529 another aſſembly was ſummoned at Spires. The papiſts inſiſted, that the ban ſhould be executed againſt the Lutherians; which was oppoſed by the electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, the duke of Lunenberg, the land grave of Heſſe, and the prince of Anhalt, who declared for a council either general or national. But the Romaniſts prevailed; Upon which the Lutherian princes and fourteen cities joined in a formal *protest*, whereby they appealed from all that ſhould be done, to the emperor, a future council, or unſuſpected judges: And accordingly they ſent proper deputies to the emperor. This was the remarkable proteſtation, which gave the name of *protestants* to the Lutherians in Germany. The Proteſtants acted with ſo much ſteadineſs and reſolution, that the emperor was much ſtartled at it, and determined to uſe moderation for the preſent. He appointed another diet to be held at Augſburg, (after he had driven Solyman the *magnificent* from Germany) and accordingly it was opened there in June 1530. It was given out that the emperor would tread the Goſpellers under his feet, which made the Proteſtant princes inclined to meet him in arms: But Luther earneſtly diſſuaded them, and by all his eloquence and endeavours, prevailed upon them to purſue pacific meaſures. The princes appointed Luther, Philip Melancthon, and other divines

to draw up their form of doctrine to lay before the diet: Luther was never suffered to appear, on account of the certain danger, but was kept in the castle of Coburg near at hand, to be consulted occasionally. The Protestant princes requested that this form of doctrine or confession of their faith afterwards called "The Augsburg Confession," might be read in a full diet: This was refused: But the emperor allowed them to read it in his presence before a special assembly of princes and others. He shed tears when he heard it, owing doubtless to the truth of the doctrines contained in it, and to the moderation which Melancthon had shewn in revising the whole. The Romanists agreed to draw up a confutation of it: They examined it step by step—Rejoinders were made; but to no effect. The diet broke up, and the princes returned home without any probability of accommodation. The Emperor procured a decree in the diet, allowing the protestant princes, till the 15th of April following to consult about their submission &c. But they remained stedfast to their principles: And the Emperor, in November, published the decree of the diet, which ordered that no alterations or innovations should be made in the faith or religious worship of the church, and that none should be admitted to the imperial chamber, who disobeyed this decree. Luther during this period, was not idle, he wrote many useful works; shewed his pastoral zeal by attending his people at Wittenberg, when the plague raged severely amongst them: Held a visitation of the churches; and opposed with all his power the offensive errors of the Antinomians, whose proceedings gave him infinite concern. His letters to the elector, and to Philip Melancthon, written about this time, are strong evidences of the greatness of his mind; his detestation of war, on a religious account; and of his strong reliance upon God, for a want of which he upbraids his less hardy, but most valuable friend, Melancthon.

The Protestant princes determined to support their cause, in 1530 and 1535 made and renewed their solemn league at Smalcald. The pope, the emperor, and the Romanists were desirous of summoning a general council, many efforts were made; much disputing passed on both sides, but no accommodation took place; and before Luther's death every thing wore the face of war, which was unhappily proclaimed in 1546. During this period Luther employed himself in the business of his function: In 1534 the German Bible was put to press and completely finished the next year.—

Eraſmus died in 1536 at Baſil, as well as Luther's great friend Martin Bucer. Luther himſelf too began to feel the decays of nature and was much afflicted with the ſtone, inſomuch that he was led to think of death with great ſeriouſneſs, and accordingly wrote ſeveral pieces on the ſubject: And in 1542, made his will. In 1543 he was engaged in controverſy with the Jews; who endeavoured to ſpread their opinions, and to make converts in Germany, but his nervous and able writings put a ſtop to their attempts. His heart was bent upon peace, and his pen was continually employed in entreating the princes to abſtain from war: And he uſed frequently to ſay, that he hoped God would hear his prayers, and never ſuffer him to live to ſee a war in Germany. His prayers were heard; but immediately after his death, the unhappy confuſion began.

In the year 1545, afflicted in body, and tormented with violent pains, which perhaps added to the diſquietude of his mind; he left Wittenberg, offended at the diſputes with the Zuinglians, and diſpleaſed with Melancthon's moderation, as Leckendorf ſuggeſts: (For Luther would not yield at all—nor give up any of thoſe ſentiments which he had ſtrongly imbibed) the remiſſneſs of diſcipline, and the too great luxury prevailing among the people there much offended him—and he declared in a letter to his wife, that as this would be the laſt year of his life, he was determined never to return to Wittenberg. John Matthæus gives us the following account of the affair: There came to Wittenberg, ſome vile and looſe women who perverted and defiled many youth of the univerſity. This gave prodigious uneaſineſs to the good old man (Luther), ſo that his ſpirit like that of Lot's in Sodom, was night and day tormented with the ſight and report of their baſe proceedings. He fought againſt them with voice and pen, and in ſhort was ſo much affected, when he could prevail nothing, that he left Wittenberg, and went to the prince of Anhalt at Marſburg. But our univerſity recalled him, with a moſt honourable embaſſy, and he returned."—There was a good deal of difficulty to perſuade him to return. The elector of Saxoney was obliged to interfere, and to condeſcend ſo much as to treat him, and to promiſe that every reformation he deſired at Wittenberg ſhould certainly be made. This year he finiſhed his commentary upon Geneſis, and concludes it thus, "I have finiſhed my commentary upon Geneſis. May God, my God grant, that others after me may interpret it much better. I can do no more, infirm and weak,

Pray to God for me, that he would grant me a good and happy hour of departure. Amen."

It happened extremely remarkable, that in the laſt year of his life, he ſhould be called into his own country, to die there, where he had been born above ſixty years before.—But ſo it was. There were ſome diſputes between the courts of Mansfield, and Luther was ſent for, to come and compoſe the difference. He preached his laſt ſermon at Wittenburgh, on the 17th. of January, 1546; and on the 23d. ſet out for Iſleben, his native place, where he was honorably entertained by the court, who eſcorted him to his apartments with an hundred horſe. He was very ill during the journey, three of his ſons, Melancthon, Juſtus, and Jonas, with ſeveral of his friends accompanied him. He attended to the buſineſs, upon which he came from the 29th of January, to the 17th of February, and preached four times. But in the evening of the 17th. he ſickened a little before ſupper of his uſual illneſs—being grievouſly tortured in his bowels with great faintneſs and weakneſs. His pains encreaſed, and he went to bed where he ſlept till midnight, when he awaked in ſuch anguiſh, that he found his life near at an end. He joined his friends in earneſt prayer; and for himſelf ſaid, "Oh my Heavenly Father, the God and Father of my Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the God of all comfort, I give thee thanks, that thou haſt revealed thy Son. Jeſus Chriſt to me, in whom I have believed, whom I have confeſſed, whom I have loved, whom I have honored, whom the pope of Rome and all his impious multitude perſecute and reproach. Thee thee, my Lord Jeſus, I earneſtly entreat to receive my poor ſoul! My heavenly Father, though I am torn from this life, though this body of mine muſt be laid down in the grave, yet I know certainly, that I ſhall abide with thee eternally, nor can I ever be plucked out of thy hands." After which he added, "So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh but have everlaſting life." He then took ſome medicine provided for him—upon which he ſaid, *I go now* and will yield up *my ſpirit*—and thrice repeated the words *Into thy hands I commend my ſpirit, for thou haſt redeemad me, O God of truth.* After this he lay ſilent, and ſpoke not, ſave that when ſome of his particular friends ſaid, Moſt reverend Father, do you die in that conſtant confeſſion of Chriſt and his truth, which you have preached?" He replied, with a clear voice—*ita*—yes verily. Afterwards turning himſelf on his left ſide, he doſed about a quarter of an hour; when

he fetched a deep but gentle ſigh, and gave up the ghoſt, ſo that nobody diſcerned the leaſt pain or emotion of his body; but he literally fell aſleep in the Lord, on the 18th of February, 1546 in the 63d year of his age. He left behind him a widow, three ſons, and two daughters.

He was honorably interred at Wittenberg; where the troops of Charles the emperor, in the year 1547, were very deſirous to pull down his monoment, and dig up his bones: But the emperor had more generoſity and prudence, than to conſent to a procedure ſo baſe and infamous. "*Let them alone*, ſaid he: *ſuffer his bones to be at rest.*" So in life and death, amidſt enemies continually deſiring his life, and blackening his reputation with the moſt odious and ſenſeleſs calumnies, he was preſerved by the good providence of his God.

He was of a large ſtature, and had ſuch a ſharp ſight that few could endure ſtedfaſtly to look at him. He had a gentle, clear and perſuaſive voice; was paſſionate, but ſoon appeaſed. He had an uncommon genius, a lively imagination, a pious and devout diſpoſition, a ſtrong tincture of melancholy and enthuſiaſm, and a great warmth and impetuoſity, which impelled him, in his controverſial writings eſpecially, to ridicule and inſult his adverſaries, and to uſe an acrimony of ſtyle, which can by no means be excuſed. He was fond of muſic, and was both a compoſer and performer; which was very good for his mind and body. It expelled melancholy, he uſed to ſay, and put the devil to flight, who mortally hated muſic; he entertained a mean opinion of the capacity and diſpoſition of thoſe, who had no taſte for this excellent art. He alſo ſacrificed to the graces, and compoſed ſome poems, Latin and German. There is great merit in many of his hymns. He was remarkable for his contented diſpoſition, a little ſatisfied his wiſhes, for he had a great contempt for money. We are much obliged to him for opening the gate of reformation, which ſhould make us the more ready to excuſe his faults: and perhaps a man of a leſs impetuous and magnanimous diſpoſition would not have been able to have perfected ſo extraordinary a work, for extraordinary we muſt needs call it, that a poor *Friar* ſhould be able to oppoſe the Pope, then the king of the kings of the earth; it was more extraordinary that he ſhould prevail; but moſt extraordinary that he ſhould die in peace, amidſt ſo many enemies. His followers have been called *Lutherans*, after him; though much againſt his approbation, "Hear, ſays he" in a book he publiſhed againſt

Tumults, &c. this I ask first, let my name be remembered no more: let no man call himself a *Lutheran* but a *Christian*. What is *Luther?* The doctrine is not mine: I have not been crucified for any one. Paul forbids any to be called after him, Peter does the same; why should I, a most contemptible worm, desire that my most worthless name should be given to the children of Christ. God forbid! Let us extinguish these factious appellations, and let us be called Christians, as holding the doctrine of Christ. The Papists justly have the name of a sect, because not content with the doctrines of Christ, they urge the dogmas of the *Pope*, and will be *Papists*. So then let them be, and so let them have the *Pope* for their master. I am not, I will not be the *master* of any one. I hold the common doctrine of Christ, with the church, he only is our master," &c. How happy would it be, if such sentiments were verified more by men's practice!

Melancthon used to say of Luther, "Pomeranius is a grammarian, I am a logician, and Justus Jonas is an Orator, but Luther is good at every thing: the wonder of mankind; for whatever he says or writes, it penetrates the heart, and makes a lasting impression." He always recommended strongly the study of the Sacred Scriptures, and Germany is particularly indebted to him for his translation of the Bible. Three things, he used to say, make a divine; meditation, prayer, and temptation: and that three things were to be done by a minister; to read the Bible diligently, to pray earnestly, and always to be a learner. We will conclude this sketch of his life, with the words of the author,* whom we have principally followed: "God grant that all who call themselves by his name, or profess that doctrine which he defended, may diligently imitate that constant endeavor after good, which was conspicuous in him, and principally his fervency in prayer, his magnanimity and resolution, his freedom from all human fears, his perfect content, and his many other singular virtues; while they are careful not to excuse or cover their own faults, and vices, under those imperfections and blemishes in his character, which from human frailty unhappily cleave to him."

We will just add, that the *will* he made had these expressions in it, "O Lord God, I thank thee, that thou wouldst have me live a poor and indigent person upon earth: I have neither house, nor land, nor possessions, nor money to leave,

* *I. Dan. Herrnschmidius.*

thou Lord haſt given me a wife and children: them, Lord, I give back to thee; nouriſh, inſtruct, and keep them, (O thou Father of the orphans, and judge of the widow) as thou haſt done to me, ſo do thou unto them." His wife during the ſubſequent years endured great hardſhips and difficulties, and at length died by an accident in going from Wittenberg in the year 1522. When Seckendorf wrote his hiſtory, at the cloſe of the laſt century, ſome of Luther's family were remaining.

London Christian Magazine.

To the Editors of the Virginia Religious Magazine,

GENTLEMEN,

HEREWITH I send you a tract in defence of household baptism. So many works have already been written on this subject, and the pieces published in your first and second volumes, have given so much satisfaction, that it may seem unnecessary and improper to continue the discussion in the Magazine. But the errour, I suppose, is zealously and unremittingly inculcated by our Baptist brethren. Being a turning point of party distinction, it is most tenaciously retained. And it has always been found to carry with it a train of melancholy consequences. For these reasons, it appears to me needful, that the truth be exhibited repeatedly, and in every point of view calculated to insure its due impression on the mind.. These ideas, however, are submitted to your better judgment, as well as the tract itself. You will either give it a place in some successive numbers of the Magazine, or suppress it, as may appear to you advisable.— Whether the arguments here advanced in defence of what we believe to be an ordinance of Christ, have a decisive force or not, I trust they will appear to have been written in the spirit of Christian meekness and charity.

EUPHRON.

THE SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE OF HOUSEHOLD BAPTISM *STATED AND DEFENDED.*

—:o:—

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

These words are a part of the commiſſion given by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt to his Apoſtles, ſhortly before his aſcention into heaven. He had finiſhed the great work for which he came into the world, had made atonement by his death for the ſins of men, had conquered the powers of darkneſs, and riſen in triumph from the grave. Poſſeſſing, as Meditor, all authority in heaven and in earth, he ſends forth his choſen meſſengers, with a commiſſion, which extends alſo to their ſucceſſors in the miniſtry to the end of time, to proclaim the glad tidings of ſalvation, and gather his church out of all the nations of the earth; promiſing to attend, preſerve and ſupport them in the execution of the arduous office to which they are appointed.

The part of the Apoſtolick commiſſion contained in the text, has long been and ſtill is a ſubject of great difference of opinion and much controverſy between our brethren the Baptiſts on one ſide, and the far greater part of the Chriſtian world on the other. It is much to be regretted that in a caſe where, by mutual acknowledgment, either opinion is entirely conſiſtent with a ſtate of holineſs and ſalvation, ſuch difference ſhould diſturb that love and harmony by which the children of God ought certainly to be united. We wiſh for peace: but we dare not ſacrifice to it the higher regard which we owe to truth. In this as well as every other article of divine revelation it is ſurely the duty of all to ſearch with patient diligence and unprejudiced candor for the truth; and to receive it, when found, in the love of it. Which may God enable us to do with the ſimplicity of heart which becomes Chriſtians.

It is neceſſary to obſerve at the outſet, what is well known to all who underſtand the original language of the New Teſtement, that the word in the text rendered, *teach*, (1) is not accurately tranſlated. It is a different word from that rendered in the ſame way in the following verſe, (2) and properly ſignifies *to make diſciples*. The true verſion, therefore,

(1) *Mathēteuste.* (2) *Didaskontes.*

Go make all nations disciples baptizing them, &c. (3) This correction of our version is now universally admitted.

In order to proceed with clearness, I shall state first how far our brethren agree with us in the explication of the text, and then, wherein we differ. It is agreed that the gospel is to be preached to all, that those who are influenced by this or other means of religious instruction as to profess their faith in Jesus Christ, and subjection to him as their Lord and Master, are to be denominated his disciples; and that all his disciples are to be baptized with water, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. But whether the household of every such disciple are, on his profession of faith, to be denominated disciples also, and accordingly baptized? And whether baptism be rightly administered by the application of water in any mode, not confined to one mode, suppose that of immersion, only? On these questions we divide: and to establish and defend the affirmative of both, is the design of this discourse.

For our assistance in these inquiries, I shall offer some preliminary observations.

That society called the church of Christ is composed of all who are his disciples throughout the world. But here a distinction must be made between the visible and the invisible church. The invisible church consists of such only as are the children of God in heart, the subjects of his sanctifying grace. The visible church consists of all such every where as are denominated and received by his ministers as disciples, according to the rules which Christ himself, the head of the church, has laid down for this purpose in his word.

As the ministers of Christ do not possess the discernment necessary to ascertain perfectly who are members of the invisible church, it is evident that such discernment cannot be the standard of procedure in the admission of members into the visible church. Who are the subjects of a real work of grace in their hearts, He only who searcheth the heart and knoweth all things can infallibly judge. And therefore in this matter as we are unable to determine so we have no concern. It is certain that ever since there was a visible church on earth, it has comprehended some who were not

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(3) Dr. Doddridge renders it, *Go forth, therefore, and proselyte all the nations.* Dr Campbell, *Go convert all the nations.* Mr. Wesley, *Disciple all nations;* which all agree perfectly in meaning with each other, and with the version I have adopted.

heirs of Chriſt's kingdom above. And this muſt unavoidably be the caſe while hypocriſy exiſts in the world, however faithful his miniſters may be in the execution of their office. Theſe remarks are made for the ſake of a concluſion which, obvious as it is, has not always been ſufficiently attended to, that no juſt objection can ariſe againſt admitting into the church any perſon, or deſcription of perſons, merely becauſe we do not know them to be real ſaints.

It is true indeed that the Apoſtolick churches are often in the New Teſtament addreſſed collectively with the character of holy or ſaints. And hence it may perhaps be thought that every member of a well regulated church muſt at leaſt be ſuppoſed to be truly a child of God; which would exclude little children, who can give no evidence at all to judge whether they be ſuch or not. But it is to be obſerved that there are two words in the original which are alike rendered in our verſion by the words *holy* and *ſaints*, though they differ much in ſignification. The one (4) always expreſſes a diſpoſition of heart conformed to the will of God. The other (5) expreſſes only a viſible relation. This laſt, or ſome derivative from it, is the word uniformly uſed in thoſe Apoſtolick addreſſes. It properly ſignifies, *ſeparated from a common to a ſacred uſe; dedicated* whether actively or paſſively, *to the ſervice of God*. It is but very ſeldom and then but figuratively uſed to expreſs an internal diſpoſition. And therefore no argument is from hence deducible that none can be rightly admitted as member's of Chriſt's viſible church unleſs they be truly converted unto God, or judged to be ſo.

But it will be aſked, what then becomes of the purity of the church? We agree that none, not even the children of profeſſing diſciples, are to be received into the church, if, being arrived at years of diſcretion, and no longer under parental controul, they diſcover themſelves to be enemies of Chriſt. Of this we are enabled to judge; and it is our duty to pay attention to it. But what has this to do with the admiſſion of the houſehold of the believer? Or what goſpel principle reſpecting the nature and purity of the church does ſuch admiſſion violate? If Chriſtian miniſters act carefully according to their rule, whatever that may be, they will have done their duty; and the church will be as pure as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt intended it ſhould be.

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(4) *Hosios.* (5) *Hagios.* See Dr. Campbell's diſſertation on *hagios* and *hosios*.

By attending a little to the conſtitution of the church of God under the former diſpenſation, upon which the apoſtle declares the Chriſtian church to be ingrafted, (6) we ſhall receive additional light on what is here aſſerted. Children with their parents were uniformly members of that church by divine command. (7) Proſelytes from other nations were alſo received in the ſame family way. (8) Hence we ſee that it is by no means inconſiſtent with the wiſdom of God that little children as well as adults ſhould be admitted and accounted his viſible people.

This ſubject ſuggeſts another remark. We find that circumciſion, the initiatory ceremony under the former diſpenſation, was alike applied to the parents and their houſeholds. Now we know that this ceremony had a ſpiritual reference and ſignification. (9) It follows that what has

(6) Rom. ii. 17, and onward. *And if ſome of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakeſt of the root and fatneſs of the olive-tree; boaſt not againſt the branches; but if thou boaſt, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee*, &c.

(7) Gen. xvii. 10. *This is my covenant which ye ſhall keep between me and you, and thy ſeed after thee; every man-child among you ſhall be circumciſed.* v. 12 *He that is eight days old ſhall be circumciſed among you*, &c. v. 13. *He that is born in thy houſe, and he that is bought with thy money, muſt needs be circumciſed; and my covenant ſhall be in your fleſh*, &c.

[8] Exod. xii. 48 49. *When a ſtranger ſhall ſojourn with thee, and will keep the paſſover to the Lord, let all his males be circumciſed*, &c. *One law ſhall be to him that is home-born, and unto the ſtranger that ſojourneth among you.*

[9] Deut. x. 16. *Circumciſe, therefore, the foreſkin of your heart and be no more ſtiffnecked.* Rom. ii. 29 *He is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumciſion is that of the heart, in the ſpirit, and not in the letter; whoſe praiſe is not of men, but of God.* And many other places. Is it not amazing that our Baptiſt brethren, with theſe evidences full in their faces, ſpeak ſo contemptuouſly, as they generally do, of circumciſion, as a mere carnal ordinance without any ſpiritual meaning? And that they toil for terms of reproach to expoſe the pretended abſurdity of infant-baptiſm, which they call by the odious name of baby-ſprinkling? When will they learn to conſider theſe things more ſoberly?

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THESE words are a part of the commiſſion given by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt to his Apoſtles, ſhortly before his aſcention into heaven. He had finiſhed the great work for which he came into the world, had made atonement by his death for the ſins of men, had conquered the powers of darkneſs, and riſen in triumph from the grave. Poſſeſſing, as Meditor, all authority in heaven and in earth, he ſends forth his choſen meſſengers, with a commiſſion, which extends alſo to their ſucceſſors in the miniſtry to the end of time, to proclaim the glad tidings of ſalvation, and gather his church out of all the nations of the earth; promiſing to attend, preſerve and ſupport them in the execution of the arduous office to which they are appointed.

The part of the Apoſtolick commiſſion contained in the text, has long been and ſtill is a ſubject of great difference of opinion and much controverſy between our brethren the Baptiſts on one ſide, and the far greater part of the Chriſtian world on the other. It is much to be regretted that in a caſe where, by mutual acknowledgment, either opinion is entirely conſiſtent with a ſtate of holineſs and ſalvation, ſuch difference ſhould diſturb that love and harmony by which the children of God ought certainly to be united. We wiſh for peace: but we dare not ſacrifice to it the higher regard which we owe to truth. In this as well as every other article of divine revelation it is ſurely the duty of all to ſearch with patient diligence and unprejudiced candor for the truth; and to receive it, when found, in the love of it. Which may God enable us to do with the ſimplicity of heart which becomes Chriſtians.

It is neceſſary to obſerve at the outſet, what is well known to all who underſtand the original language of the New Teſtement, that the word in the text rendered, *teach*, (1) is not accurately tranſlated. It is a different word from that rendered in the ſame way in the following verſe, (2) and properly ſignifies *to make diſciples*. The true verſion, therefore,

(1) *Mathēteusate.* (2) *Didaskontes.*

Go make all nations disciples baptizing them, &c. (3) This correction of our version is now universally admitted.

In order to proceed with clearness, I shall state first how far our brethren agree with us in the explication of the text, and then, wherein we differ. It is agreed that the gospel is to be preached to all, that those who are influenced by this or other means of religious instruction as to profess their faith in Jesus Christ, and subjection to him as their Lord and Master, are to be denominated his disciples; and that all his disciples are to be baptized with water, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. But whether the household of every such disciple are, on his profession of faith, to be denominated disciples also, and accordingly baptized? And whether baptism be rightly administered by the application of water in any mode, not confined to one mode, suppose that of immersion, only? On these questions we divide: and to establish and defend the affirmative of both, is the design of this discourse.

For our assistance in these inquiries, I shall offer some preliminary observations.

That society called the church of Christ is composed of all who are his disciples throughout the world. But here a distinction must be made between the visible and the invisible church. The invisible church consists of such only as are the children of God in heart, the subjects of his sanctifying grace. The visible church consists of all such every where as are denominated and received by his ministers as disciples, according to the rules which Christ himself, the head of the church, has laid down for this purpose in his word.

As the ministers of Christ do not possess the discernment necessary to ascertain perfectly who are members of the invisible church, it is evident that such discernment cannot be the standard of procedure in the admission of members into the visible church. Who are the subjects of a real work of grace in their hearts, He only who searcheth the heart and knoweth all things can infallibly judge. And therefore in this matter as we are unable to determine so we have no concern. It is certain that ever since there was a visible church on earth, it has comprehended some who were not

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(3) Dr. Doddridge renders it, *Go forth, therefore, and proselyte all the nations.* Dr Campbell, *Go convert all the nations.* Mr. Wesley, *Disciple all nations;* which all agree perfectly in meaning with each other, and with the version I have adopted.

heirs of Chriſt's kingdom above. And this muſt unavoidably be the caſe while hypocriſy exiſts in the world, however faithful his miniſters may be in the execution of their office. Theſe remarks are made for the ſake of a concluſion which, obvious as it is, has not always been ſufficiently attended to, that no juſt objection can ariſe againſt admitting into the church any perſon, or deſcription of perſons, merely becauſe we do not know them to be real ſaints.

It is true indeed that the Apoſtolick churches are often in the New Teſtament addreſſed collectively with the character of holy or ſaints. And hence it may perhaps be thought that every member of a well regulated church muſt at leaſt be ſuppoſed to be truly a child of God; which would exclude little children, who can give no evidence at all to judge whether they be ſuch or not. But it is to be obſerved that there are two words in the original which are alike rendered in our verſion by the words *holy* and *ſaints*, though they differ much in ſignification. The one (4) always expreſſes a diſpoſition of heart conformed to the will of God. The other (5) expreſſes only a viſible relation. This laſt, or ſome derivative from it, is the word uniformly uſed in thoſe Apoſtolick addreſſes. It properly ſignifies, *ſeparated from a common to a ſacred uſe; dedicated* whether actively or paſſively, *to the ſervice of God*. It is but very ſeldom and then but figuratively uſed to expreſs an internal diſpoſition. And therefore no argument is from hence deducible that none can be rightly admitted as member's of Chriſt's viſible church unleſs they be truly converted unto God, or judged to be ſo.

But it will be aſked, what then becomes of the purity of the church? We agree that none, not even the children of profeſſing diſciples, are to be received into the church, if, being arrived at years of diſcretion, and no longer under parental controul, they diſcover themſelves to be enemies of Chriſt. Of this we are enabled to judge; and it is our duty to pay attention to it. But what has this to do with the admiſſion of the houſehold of the believer? Or what goſpel principle reſpecting the nature and purity of the church does ſuch admiſſion violate? If Chriſtian miniſters act carefully according to their rule, whatever that may be, they will have done their duty; and the church will be as pure as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt intended it ſhould be.

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(4) *Hosios.* (5) *Hagios.* See Dr. Campbell's diſſertation on *hagios* and *hosios*.

By attending a little to the conſtitution of the church of God under the former diſpenſation, upon which the apoſtle declares the Chriſtian church to be ingrafted, (6) we ſhall receive additional light on what is here aſſerted. Children with their parents were uniformly members of that church by divine command. (7) Proſelytes from other nations were alſo received in the ſame family way. (8) Hence we ſee that it is by no means inconſiſtent with the wiſdom of God that little children as well as adults ſhould be admitted and accounted his viſible people.

This ſubject ſuggeſts another remark. We find that circumciſion, the initiatory ceremony under the former diſpenſation, was alike applied to the parents and their houſeholds. Now we know that this ceremony had a ſpiritual reference and ſignification. (9) It follows that what has

(6) Rom. ii. 17, and onward. *And if ſome of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakeſt of the root and fatneſs of the olive-tree; boaſt not againſt the branches; but if thou boaſt, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee*, &c.

(7) Gen. xvii. 10. *This is my covenant which ye ſhall keep between me and you, and thy ſeed after thee; every man-child among you ſhall be circumciſed.* v. 12 *He that is eight days old ſhall be circumciſed among you*, &c. v. 13. *He that is born in thy houſe, and he that is bought with thy money, muſt needs be circumciſed; and my covenant ſhall be in your fleſh*, &c.

[8] Exod. xii. 48 49. *When a ſtranger ſhall ſojourn with thee, and will keep the paſſover to the Lord, let all his males be circumciſed*, &c. *One law ſhall be to him that is home-born, and unto the ſtranger that ſojourneth among you.*

[9] Deut. x. 16. *Circumciſe, therefore, the foreſkin of your heart and be no more ſtiffnecked.* Rom. ii. 29 *He is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumciſion is that of the heart, in the ſpirit, and not in the letter; whoſe praiſe is not of men, but of God.* And many other places. Is it not amazing that our Baptiſt brethren, with theſe evidences full in their faces, ſpeak ſo contemptuoutly, as they generally do, of circumciſion, as a mere carnal ordinance without any ſpiritual meaning? And that they toil for terms of reproach to expoſe the pretended abſurdity of infant-baptiſm, which they call by the odious name of baby-ſprinkling? When will they learn to conſider theſe things more ſoberly?

been ſo often and ſo confidently aſſerted, that it is altogether abſurd to apply a ſignificant religius rite to ſubjects who cannot at preſent underſtand its nature and deſign, falls at once to the ground.

With regard then to adults who act for themſelves in this matter, the ground and rule of admiſſion into the church appears to be a perſonal profeſſion of ſubjection to Chriſt. As to the houſeholds of ſuch profeſſors, what has hitherto been ſaid is not ſuppoſed to prove, but only to open the way to the ſubſequent proof, that they are to be admitted alſo.

I ſhall next premiſe a few obſervations on the nature of poſitive inſtitutions in religion, of which Chriſtian babtiſm is one.

Poſitive duties are ſo called to diſtinguiſh them from moral duties, becauſe in ſome reſpects they differ from each other. Moral precepts are precepts the reaſon of which we ſee. In poſitive precepts, though we may ſee the utility of ſuch inſtitutions in general to the promotion of piety, yet we do not ſee the reaſon why a particular one is preferred.— Moral duties ariſe out of the relations which we ſuſtain to God and our neighbour. Poſitive duties do not ariſe from ſuch relations, but from external command given by God himſelf; nor would they without ſuch command be duties at all. Thus, that we ſhould love God with ſupreme affection, that we ſhould render to every man his due; theſe are moral duties. They ariſe evidently out of our acknowed relations to God and our fellow-men, would be binding on us, though never enforced by an external command. But that we ſhould be baptized with water, as a part of religion, could never be ſeen to ariſe out of thoſe relations; and therefore muſt derive its binding force from a revealed precept. But though moral and poſitive duties thus differ, there are other reſpects in which they agree and coincide. When the command for the obſervance of a poſitive duty is actually given, it falls immediately within that univerſal obedience which we owe to the ſupreme Sovereign. Being a part of his will, it is ultimately referred to the ſame ſource as moral duties, and partakes of their nature. Thus, when the divine precept for baptiſm is made known, we can no more doubt or evade our duty to be baptized according to that precept, than we can doubt or evade our obligations to love God and do juſtice to our neighbour.

On account of the neceſſity of external command as the foundation of poſitive inſtitutions, our Baptiſt brethren ſeem univerſally to ſuppoſe that, from the very nature of ſuch

inſtitutions, there is no room for reaſoning in the way of analogy, or indeed for any kind of reaſoning at all, concerning them. They expect the circumſtances of poſitive inſtitutions, of baptiſm, for inſtance, to be expreſsly ſtated in a precept, or at leaſt unequivocally exhibited in the practice of inſpired men. Hence they inceſſantly call on us for expreſs precept or example to warrant our practice in regard both to the ſubjects and the mode of baptiſm. And whatever we advance, not preciſely of this kind, is rejected, often almoſt without a hearing.

Now could theſe principles of our brethren be eſtabliſhed, we ſhould acknowledge them to have great weight in the preſent controverſy. It is evident, however, that in proportion to their importance we ſhould be careful to examine whether they be true or not.

We may obſerve then, in the firſt place, that there does not appear to be any thing in the general nature of poſitive inſtitutions on which ſuch principles can reſt. When a poſitive duty is to be inſtituted, who ſhall limit the ſupreme Lawgiver in the mode of expreſſing his command? Why may not ſome, nay many of the circumſtances of performing the ordinance be left to be deduced by analogical reaſoning from other ordinances before eſtabliſhed, or even be left to the pious diſcretion of God's miniſters and people? It is eaſy to anſwer ſuch queſtions by invective, but they ought to be anſwered ſoberly. It is in the way I have mentioned that we have to diſcover moral duty in innumerable inſtances. And though our brethren ſeem to think that poſitive inſtitutions have ſome peculiar ſacredneſs above moral duties, this has never yet been proved. Were it neceſſary to our purpoſe, I think it would be eaſy to prove the contrary. One thing we know certainly that we cannot be accepted with God in the performance of any duty, whether moral or poſitive, without one and the ſame only diſpoſition and purpoſe of the heart.

But farther; there are inſurmountable objections to the Baptiſt principles above mentioned.

On a careful attention to the poſitive inſtitutions both of the former church and the preſent, or rather of the ſame church of God under different diſpenſations, (10) we ſhall

(10) The ſubſtantial identity of the Hebrew and Chriſtian churches is well eſtabliſhed by the Rev. Mr. Cowles, in his *Hebrew or Jewish, and Christian church the same;* and the doctrine judiciouſly applied in proof of infant baptiſm.

find reaſon to conclude that many important circumſtances of thoſe inſtitutions are left to be diſcovered by inference, and others quite undefined and diſcretionary.

In the caſe of circumciſion ſome things were expreſsly enjoined. The rite itſelf was clearly pointed out. (11) The time of performing it was alſo fixed with equal preciſion. (12) But can our brethren ſhow us where the adminiſtrator of circumciſion is marked out? It was not limited to the prieſts. It ſeems that even women were permitted to perform it; for we find the wife of Moſes circumciſing her ſon. (13) Now without an adminiſtrator the ordinance could not poſſibly be executed; and yet, for ought we are able to learn, this was left as a matter of indifference and diſcretion.

Again; there is no expreſs precept nor example in the New Teſtament for women's participation of the Lord's ſupper. And yet our brethren doubt as little as we that it is the duty and privilege of all Chriſtians equally, of the one ſex as well as the other. This can only be proved by inference from the nature of the ordinance; and it is agreed to be proved with certainty in this way. But how is this conſiſtent with the principle which demands expreſs precept or example as the only ſufficient evidence? (14) We may obſerve farther, that in the inſtitution of the ſupper we ſee no limitation in regard to the adminiſtrator, nor in regard to the time when, or how often, it is to be adminiſtered. All theſe are either to be learned by inference or are left to diſcretion.

But let us come to baptiſm itſelf. Is every thing fixed here? Far from it. In the firſt place, the very exiſtence of water-baptism as a ſtanding ordinance in the church to the end of time is no where expreſsly declared in the New

(11) Gen. xvii. 11. *And ye ſhall circumcise the fleſh of your fore-ſkin, and it ſhall be a token*, &c.

(12) Gen. xvii. 12. *And he that is eight days old ſhall be circumcised among you, every man child*, &c.

(13) Exod. iv. 25. *Then Zipporah took a ſharp ſtone, and cut off the foreſkin of her ſon*, &c.

14. This point of female communion is urged with invincible force of argument by Mr. Peter Edwards, in his *Canaid Reaſons for renouncing the principles of Antipedobaptism*. Indeed he has managed the whole controverſy in a maſterly manner: and I earneſtly recommend his book as one of the very beſt on this ſubject that I have ever ſeen.

Teſtament. Let not the reader be ſtartled at this poſition, but conſider it carefully. We think the perpetuity of baptiſm is with certainty inferred from the Apoſtolick commiſſion, as well as from other ſources. But it certainly is not a matter of expreſs precept. Nor can our brethren conſiſtently contend that the practice of baptiſm by the Apoſtles is of itſelf ſufficient to ſupport its perpetuity; unleſs they alſo aſſert, as I believe they will not, that every individual thing which was done by the Apoſtles is binding upon all Chriſtians in every age. Again; how do our brethren know that the adminiſtration of baptiſm is confined to the miniſters of the goſpel? Is it any where expreſsly ſo limited? Can it be made out otherwiſe than by inference? Nor is any preciſe time of baptiſm fixed in the inſtitution. Our brethren themſelves do not ſuppoſe that there is. For though it is agreed that baptiſm ought to take place ſoon after a profeſſion of faith, yet their univerſal practice proves that they do not conſider themſelves bound indiſpenſably to an hour or a day; and they frequently delay it, from motives of convenience, ſeveral days, ſometimes even ſeveral weeks. By the way, this circumſtance of time, which is left ſo indefinite in regard to baptiſm, is one of the few which were abſolutely fixed in regard to circumciſion.

Theſe obſervations ſerve to ſhow, what is of much importance in the controverſy concerning baptiſm, that expreſs precept or apoſtolick example cannot rightly be conſidered as the only means of aſcertaining our duty in regard to this inſtitution. Whatever evidence and juſt reaſoning may throw light on the ſubject ought, in this, as well as in all other caſes, to be admitted and applied. And after all, it will be found that ſome things are left to exerciſe Chriſtian prudence and diſcretion.

Let us now proceed to the direct diſcuſſion of our ſubject. And for the ſake of eaſe and clearneſs, let us inquire firſt, whether the houſehold of the profeſſing believer are according to Chriſt's inſtitution to be baptized? And then, whether baptiſm may lawfully be adminiſtered in various modes, or is limited to one mode only? This is the common diviſion. The queſtions are really diſtinct, and were ſo ſtated at the beginning of this diſcourſe.

Go, ſays our Lord, *make all nations diſciples, baptizing them.* How are we to underſtand this command? How did they underſtand it to whom it was addreſſed? In order to make this diſcovery, we ſhould not only ſtudy the import of the words themſelves, but alſo the education, the opin-

ſions and even the prejudices of the Apoſtles; for prejudices they certainly had at that time, and ſtrong ones too. In a word, we ſhould labour to place ourſelves, as it were, in their very poſition, ſurrounded with all the circumſtances in which they ſtood when they received this injunction. In proportion as we ſucceed in this attempt, we ſhall be likely to aſcertain how they underſtood the commiſſion of their Lord; and their underſtanding of it will exhibit its infallible meaning, unleſs ſubſequent evidence ſhall ariſe to prove that they were miſtaken. I lay this down as a general rule for the explication of all thoſe parts of ancient records which conſiſt of addreſſes from one perſon to another. If the reader have any doubt of its correctneſs, I invite him to pauſe and examine it carefully before he proceed farther. Such an examination, I am confident, will convince him that the rule is a juſt one, and of great importance in the interpretation of the ſcriptures.

The Apoſtles, then, could not be ignorant that in all the important affairs of life it was common for parents to act and engage in behalf of their children; heads of families in behalf of their houſeholds. They knew that it was common for children to be comprehended with their parents in thoſe covenants which God had at various times made with men. But farther; they were Jews, members of the Jewiſh church; the admiſſion of families into which church was a fundamental principle and an invariable practice. From the founding of that church in the houſe of Abraham, The children and ſervants of Hebrew believers were uniformly received and included within it. And whereas a law had been given, for the admiſſion into that church of proſelytes from other nations, they knew that by the law the houſeholds of profeſſing proſelytes were admitted with them, and were equally ſubjects of the initiating ordinance. Nor had they, ſo far as we can diſcover, ever heard from their maſter any intimation that he intended any change in this matter.

I have farther to obſerve that it is a fact well eſtabliſhed by ancient teſtimony that it was an univerſal cuſtom amongſt the Jews to baptize at the ſame time that they circumciſed their proſelytes, both parents and children. (15) That this

(15) "No one is a proſelyte until he be circumciſed and baptized." This was a ſtanding rule amongſt the Jews.—"If ſays Maimonides, an Iſrælite find a heathen infant, and baptize him in the name of a proſelyte, behold, he is a proſelyte."

practice exiſted before the coming of our Lord appears certain; as, beſides the teſtimonies which prove it, it is utterly incredible that the Jews ſhould have aſſumed the rite in imitation of the Chriſtians whom they rancorouſly hated and deſpiſed. This fact accounts in the beſt manner for the reception which John's baptiſm met with from the Jews. It is remarkable that they expreſs no ſurpriſe, nor aſk any queſtions, about his baptizing with water as a religious rite. They only inquire for the authority of his commiſſion. (16) This is inconſiſtent with baptiſm's being a novelty among them as a ſign of entering into a new religious relation; and concurs with the other evidence to prove that it was a conſtant practice.

It may be objected that this Jewiſh baptiſm, not being founded or at leaſt clearly aſcertained by their law, ſhould not be ſuppoſed to have any influence on the minds of the Apoſtles in the underſtanding of their commiſſion. But this concluſion I cannot admit. It was a matter of fact with which they muſt have been well acquainted; and we do not find that our Lord ever condemned it. It would, therefore, have its influence on the minds of the Apoſtles. It is not true that every Jewiſh inſtitution of which we do not find the divine authority in their law was implicitly condemned by our Lord. When and by what authority were the Jewiſh ſynagogues inſtituted? On this ſubject the Old Teſtament is altogether ſilent. Yet our Lord gave them his unequivocal approbation by conſtantly officiating in them.— Nay, the government and modes of worſhip of the Chriſtian church were in a great meaſure conformed to the model of the ſynagogue.

Another remark, of no little weight, preſents itſelf here. It was a cuſtom amongſt the Jews to conclude the celebration of the paſſover by eating bread and drinking wine.— Of this we need no other evidence than the account given of the laſt paſſover celebrated by our Lord with his Apoſtles. (17) Now this very Jewiſh cuſtom our Lord ſolemnly appointed to be a ſtanding ordinance in his church. Have our Baptiſt brethren ſuch an antipathy to every thing Jewiſh, that they have never obſerved this fact? When, therefore,

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16. John i. 25. *And they asked him, and said unto him, why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias neither that prophet?*

17. Luke xxii. 19. 20. *And he took bread, and gave thanks,* &c. *Likewise also the cup after supper,* &c.

the command was given to make disciples and baptize, would not the Apostles naturally understand it as an adoption of the Jewish babtism? Are not the two cases strongly analogous?

Considering then the circumstances of the Apostles, and the views of things which they must have had, let us suppose them to have been divinely commissioned to go forth to all the nations, and make them disciples to Moses, initiating them into that state by circumcision. Would they not have thought themselves bound to receive and circumcise the children with their parents, the households with their believing heads? I think it perfectly evident that they would. Now only substitute the name of Christ for that of Moses, and baptism for circumcision, and it becomes the very commission contained in the text. Considering this, together with what we have seen concerning Jewish baptism, must we not conclude that the commission contemplated the baptism of the households of believers as well as of themselves, and that the Apostles so understood it?

Should it be objected, that so far as any conclusion can be formed from circumcision to baptism, it will only warrant the baptism of males, as none but males were circumcised: I answer that the efficacy of circumcision was considered as extending to females also; (18) that females are as capable of being baptized as males; that they are disciples, and all disciples are by the text commanded to be baptized; and finally, that care has been taken to inform us expressly that baptism belongs equally to both sexes. (19)

Supposing the Apostles to have understood their commission rightly, there still remains to be answered an objection against our conclusion. This is founded on the meaning of the word disciple. It has often been asserted by our brethren, and that with much confidence, that little children being incapable of being taught cannot be made disciples; nay, that discipleship necessarily implies not only a capacity of instruction, but actual previous instruction. But is this assertion true? I acknowledge that the term disciple has a relation to instruction. But it by no means implies univer-

18. Exod. xii. 4. *And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it, according to the number of the souls;* &c. Compared with v. 48.—*for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.*

(19) Acts viii. 12.—*They were baptized, both men and women.*

ſally that he who is called a diſciple muſt have been previouſly inſtructed. A diſciple is one who puts himſelf or who is put by others under the authority of a teacher. The word applies equally to both caſes. We agree that of adults no longer under the controul of parents, no perſon can be called a diſciple of Chriſt without a profeſſion of faith in him as the Meſſiah, and of ſubjection to his authority. But what has this to do with the reception of children as his diſciples? How does it oppoſe their admiſſion into his ſchool, that they may be taught in future? Is it fair reaſoning, that becauſe adults are not to be received without a profeſſion of voluntary ſubjection to Chriſt, therefore, children, incapable of making ſuch profeſſion, are to be excluded? I think not. But I go farther, and obſerve that there is a text in the New Teſtament where little children are manifeſtly called diſciples. There were a ſet of men in the days of the Apoſtles who went about perſuading the Chriſtian converts that they muſt needs be circumciſed and keep the law. It is evident that they wiſhed to burden them with the whole law of Moſes; and inſiſted particularly on circumciſion as the groundwork, and that which could give a binding force to the reſt. Now this matter being propoſed to the Apoſtles and brethren, it was aſſerted by Peter, and afterwards determined by them all, that it was not neceſſary to *impose this yoke upthe neck of the disciples*. (20) Had the falſe teachers gained their object, it is certain that the heavy yoke of circumciſion would have fallen principally on the infantile age. So it had been in the Jewiſh church; and ſo it would have been in the Chriſtian church. Little children, therefore, are here called diſciples. We may remark moreover, that this text affords an obvious and ſtrong proof of our main point, that the children of profeſſing believers were received with them into the church.

Should our brethren ſtill heſitate about infant diſcipleſhip, I will propoſe to their conſideration this queſtion; is there any thing more ſtrange in the denominating of little children diſciples, than in their entering and being taken into covenent with God, of whatever nature the covenent may be? Yet this latter cannot be denied to have taken place. Beſides the great covenent made with Abraham, (21) Moſes has left on record a moſt ſtriking inſtance of it which

20. Acts xv. 10.

[21] On this point the reader is requeſted to read Gen. xvii. carefully throughout.

took place under his adminiſtration. (22) On the whole, therefore, I conclude that the Apoſtles muſt have underſtood their commiſſion to enjoin the reception as diſciples, and conſequently the baptiſm, of the houſehold of the believer, as well as of the believer himſelf.

But there ſtill remains an objection, which though it has never, ſo far as I know, been made, might be made with as much plauſibility as many others which we have to encounter; and therefore I ſhall give it ſome attention. It may be ſaid that though the Apoſtles did underſtand their commiſſion in this manner, yet it is poſſible they were miſtaken. It is abundantly evident that they were much prejudiced all along in favour of Jewiſh notions and cuſtoms. They even appear to have miſunderſtand an important part of their commiſſion, ſuppoſing that it limited the exerciſe of their miniſtry to their own countrymen. And this being the caſe, how do we know that they were not miſtaken at that time in regard to the proper ſubjects of baptiſm? In anſwer to this, I grant they did miſtake as to the extenſive exerciſe of their miniſtry. But this errour was amply corrected. A new revelation was given to explain to them the true extent of their commiſſion. (23) And could a like correction be ſhown in the other caſe, the objection would be concluſive. But no ſuch thing can be produced. Let no man then preſume a miſtake in them, which is no where found to be rectified by the ſpirit of God, under whoſe ſpecial guidance they were. Nor is this all. A ſtrong argument ariſes from the matter here conſidered, in ſupport of our doctrine. As the Apoſtles were ſo ſlowly and with ſuch difficulty diveſted of their Jewiſh prejudices: as they did through thoſe prejudices actually err in regard to the extent of their commiſſion, ſo that a new revelation was neceſſary to ſet them right; This ſhows clearly, I think, that they would underſtand their orders reſpecting baptiſm as I have repreſented; and that it was neceſſary to guard them,

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22. Deut. xxix. 10, 11, 12. *Ye ſtand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Iſrael; your little ones, your wives, and the ſtranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water; that thou ſhouldſt enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into the oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day.*

23. Acts x. Particularly *v.* 28.—*God hath ſhewed me that I ſhould not call any man common or unclean.*

or inſtruct them better afterwards, if it were a miſtake. If our divine Lawgiver intended ſo material a change in the conſtitution of the church, as that a large deſcription of perſons who had always been members of it ſhould be ſo no longer, is it credible that he would expreſs his will in terms which would ſo naturally be underſtood to lead to a contrary concluſion? In ſuch terms we ſee that he did expreſs his will. There is no where any intimation that his miniſters miſunderſtood it. Therefore they underſtood it rightly, and in the ſenſe which I have been endeavouring to eſtabliſh.

I have ſtill farther to obſerve that the commiſſion can never, on the interpretation which our Baptiſt brethren give it, be fully accompliſhed. We have ſeen the goſpel of Chriſt carried into moſt of the nations of the earth; but we have never ſeen all nations, nor even all the individuals of any one nation, made diſciples. The glorious ſcheme is gradual in its progreſs; but it will finally be accompliſhed in its fulleſt extent. All the nations will be made diſciples. Now as little children compoſe a great part of every nation, they muſt alſo be made diſciples and baptized in thoſe happy days of the church, which all chriſtians with joy anticipate. For it is impoſſible that all nations ſhould be taken into the church, while, as the doctrine of our brethren would have it, a large portion of every one would be excluded from it. Hence then we derive an additional argument to prove that doctrine unſcriptural, and that the commiſſion enjoins the baptiſm of little children as well as of their parents.

I do not forget, all this while, thoſe texts which our Baptiſt brethren ſo conſtantly and ſo confidently urge as concluſive againſt us; ſuch as theſe: *Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jeſus Chriſt for the remiſſion of ſins.* (24) *When they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jeſus Chriſt, they were baptized, both men and women;* (25) and above all, *Go ye into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not ſhall be damned.* (26) Theſe texts prove clearly enough the baptiſm of profeſſing believers, not having been before baptized. But they are ſo manifeſtly to be confined to adults, capable of hearing, underſtanding and obeying the goſpel, that it is really aſtoniſhing they ſhould ever be thought applicable to the queſtion concerning pedobaptiſm; a queſtion which they

24. Acts ii. 38. | 25. Acts viii. 12. | 26. Mark xvi. 15. 16.

leave perfectly open to inveſtigation on its own proper evidence. Let us, for inſtance, conſider for a moment the laſt mentioned of theſe texts; *He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not ſhall be damned.* If this be not confined to adults, but underſtood univerſally, it will inevitably involve the eternal damnation of every human being that dies in infancy; for they are abſolutely incapable of hearing or believing the goſpel. Will our Baptiſt brethren avow this conſequence? Or can they, conſiſtently with their interpretation, overthrow it? For my part, I do not expect at their hands either the avowal or the refutation.

Let us now enquire whether there be any ſcriptural evidence beyond the commiſſion itſelf, to aſſiſt in the explication of it.

The practice of the Apoſtles in this matter, if it can be aſcertained will furniſh the beſt comment on the commiſſion. The adminiſtration of baptiſm is mentioned again and again in the courſe of their hiſtory. I acknowledge that in many of the inſtances we have no notice of the baptiſm of any but profeſſing believers. But it is ſtrange that this ſhould ever have been urged by our brethren as an argument for the excluſion of little children. Such a rule of reaſoning would make ſtrange work indeed with the ſcriptures, as well as all other hiſtorical writings. Silence neither affirms nor denies any thing; from mere ſilence, therefore, no concluſion can be ſafely formed in any caſe. How few inſtances, perhaps not more than one, have we left on record of infant circumciſion after the days of Abraham. (27) And yet from that time downward through a long period of ages it was, no doubt, with the exception of the forty years ſpent in the wilderneſs, (28) a conſtant practice.

But we have on record ſeveral inſtances of houſehold baptiſm, which ſtrongly ſupport our doctrine. Theſe are the houſeholds of Stephanas, (29) Lydia, (30) and the Jail-

(27) Namely, the circumciſion of the ſon of Moſes; Exod. iv. 25.

(28) Joſh. v. 7. *And their children, whom He raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way.*

(29) 1 Cor. i. 16. *And I baptised also the household of Stephanas.*

(30) Acts xvi. 14. 15. *And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple,* &c. *heard us: whose heart the Lord*

or. (31) Except the heads of these families, we hear of no believers in them; yet all were baptized. The facts are related in the manner of events common and well known; and naturally impress the belief that each household was baptized in consequence of the professed faith of its head. Of the two latter cases mentioned we have such circumstantial accounts as deserve particular attention. As to Lydia, we are expressly informed that *her heart was opened to attend to the word preached;* that is, she became a believer: and then she was baptized with her household. Of the Jailor we are particularly told that he was greatly alarmed; that he asked *what he should do to be saved:* and on professing himself a believer, he was baptized, and all his straightway. And in the general joy of the house after all were baptized, we are told that *he believed in God;* without any intimation that any other of his household believed. (32)

But it is objected that we do not know certainly whether any of those households contained infants or not. I might reply, that it is highly improbable there should be three families taken indiscriminately, without any infants in them. But waving this, let it be remembered, that we by no means plead for the baptism of infants merely because they are infants. We maintain that when a head of a family becomes by faith a disciple of Christ, his children and servants, whether they be infants or not, are to be reckoned disciples and baptized, if they can properly be said to belong to his household. We all agree that those who are adults, and masters of their own actions, are to be received or rejected personally on their own account. As to the rest, who they are that compose the household of the believer, the administrator of

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opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptised, and her household, she besought us, if ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

31. Acts xvi. 33. *And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his straightway.*

32. Acts xvi. 34. The original is, *egalliasato panoiki pepisteukos to Theo;* of which our version, *he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house,* is not accurate. The exact translation is, *he rejoiced with all his house, he himself having believed in God:* or, which is the same thing, *he having believed in God, rejoiced with all his house.*

the ordinance muſt judge in the exerciſe of his miniſterial diſcretion. It may perhaps be ſaid, that a man's wife forms a part of his houſehold; and therefore ought, on the ſyſtem I maintain, to be baptized in conſequence of his profeſſion of faith. To this I anſwer, common ſenſe teaches us, that the wife is not under the authority and pupilage of her huſband in the ſame way that his children and domeſticks are. She is in fact a joint, though in ſome degree a ſubordinate head with him over the family. But did I think otherwiſe, I ſhould feel myſelf obliged to admit the conſequence, and act upon it; and by no means to relinquiſh, on this account, the ſcriptural doctrine of houſehold baptiſm.

Let any man carefully and candidly review theſe inſtances of houſhold baptiſm, as related in the new Teſtament; and then ſay whether, ſuppoſing the practice of the Apoſtles not to have been as I have ſtated it, their account of the matter be not calculated to miſlead the reader? This, I think, muſt be acknowledged. But no Chriſtian will ſay there was a deſign to miſlead. Conſequently, the Apoſtles did practiſe that baptiſm for which I contend; and their practice coincides perfectly with the commiſſion under which they acted.

The limits of this diſcourſe forbid my expatiating on ſeveral paſſages of the New Teſtament, which combine, either directly or indirectly, to eſtabliſh our doctrine. I cannot omit, however, to bring into view that remarkable text where the Apoſtle expreſsly denominates the children of a believer holy. *For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.* (33) The import of this word, *holy*, has been already obſerved. It ſignifies, *dedicated to God*; and when applied in the ſcriptures to perſons, is uniformly limited to thoſe who are viſibly the people of God, and received into his church.—Thus the Jews, with their children, were called a holy nation, (34) not becauſe they all truly loved and ſerved God; for this they did not: but becauſe they were his profeſſing, viſible people, ſeparated to be ſuch from the other nations of the earth. Thus viſible Chriſtians are denominated holy, or ſaints; (35) and amongſt them the Apoſtle includes the

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33. 1 Cor. vii. 14. 34. Exod. xix. 6. *And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.*

35. 1 Pet. ii. 9. *Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.* See the New Teſtament generally.

children of the believer. I conclude, therefore, that they are the proper ſubjects of that ordinance which is the ſign of their dedication to God, and the regular door of admiſſion into the viſible church.

Our brethren acknowlegde that the common meaning of the word *holy*, which is here applied to the children of the believer, is as I have ſtated. But they object, that the ſame thing is applied to the unbelieving parent, who is alſo ſaid to be ſanctified or made holy by the believer. If, therefore, this holineſs prove the baptiſm of the children, they urge that it will prove that of the unbelieving parent alſo. And to avoid both theſe, they aſſert that the holineſs here mentioned muſt mean ſomething quite different from what it does in all other places. Of this ſingular meaning I ſhall ſpeak at large preſently.

In anſwer to the objection, I muſt obſerve that there is ſome inaccuracy in the tranſlation of this text. The Apoſtle, ſpeaking of the parents, uſes the paſt, not the preſent time.(36) The true verſion is, *the unbeliever hath been ſanctified by the believer*. The Apoſtle is anſwering the queſtion, whether a believer might lawfully continue in the marriage ſtate with the unbeliever? His deciſion is that they ſhould not ſeparate: and he appears to reaſon thus upon the point. 'Let them continue together; for there have been inſtances heretofore of unbelievers brought to the faith and profeſſion of the true religion, and into the church of Chriſt, by means of their believing partners: and there is reaſon to hope for the ſame thing in future. And were it not for this conſoling proſpect, your children would be conſidered unclean, would not be admitted into the church: for there would not be ſufficient ground to hope that they would be trained up as becometh Chriſtians, which is the great rea-

36. The original is, *Egiastai gar o aner o apistos*, &c. I make no apology for recurring ſo frequently to critical emendations of our verſion of the ſcriptures. It is, in the general, an excellent one. But, whether people chooſe to know it or not, the fact is, that our Engliſh tranſlation of the Bible is the work of men uninſpired and fallible, however learned and upright. The original ſcriptures alone are our infallible ſtandard; and they are as open to inveſtigation now as ever they were. Of our criticiſms let thoſe judge whom learning has qualified for the office. I think I foreſee a torrent of invective to be poured out upon this harmleſs note; but I foreſee, without the ſmalleſt dread of it.

ſon why any are received into the viſible church. But now are they holy, received into the church by baptiſm, juſt as they would be if both parents were believers.' This interpretation appears to ſet the whole matter in a natural and intelligible light. It completely removes the objection, by aſſigning to the holineſs here attributed to the parents and the children an uniform meaning, namely that of dedication to God; which, at the ſame time, is the uniform ſcriptural uſe of the word.

According to our brethren, the Apoſtle's meaning is, that the children were legitimate, not baſtards. Is not this ſufficiently refuted by the fact, that though this word, holy, with its derivatives, be uſed about ſix hundred times in the ſcriptures, it never has, nor is any where elſe pretended to have any ſuch meaning? But beſides; if this be indeed the Apoſtle's meaning, about what, I pray, is he arguing? For he evidently does form an argument about ſomething. Does he infer that the parents had been lawfully married to each other, becauſe their children were legitimate? Nothing could be more abſurd; for the legitimacy of children muſt ever take for granted the validity of their parents' marriage, inſtead of proving it. Does the Apoſtle mean to inform them, that if they had not been lawfully married, their children would have been baſtards? Wonderful inſtruction this indeed! In fine, the queſtion was not, whether the marriage had been rightly formed according to the laws of their country, nor whether their children were legitimate or not; for theſe things they muſt have known quite as well as the Apoſtle: but whether Chriſtianity did not ſo influence and modify the marriage relation, that when one of the parties became a believer, he or ſhe ſhould ſeperate from the unbeliever; a point on which the early converts might naturally enough ſtart a ſcruple. To this queſtion our brethren's interpretation of the text exhibits no ſhadow of an anſwer. Ours, on the other hand, applies directly to the queſtion. The parents are commanded not to ſeperate, becauſe there is reaſon, from paſt experience, to hope that the believer may convert the unbeliever. And the lawfulneſs of their continuing together is farther illuſtrated by an alluſion to the well known practice of baptizing their children. Whether this expoſition be not every way more worthy of acceptance than that of our brethren, I leave to every impartial inquirer after truth to determine.

I ſhall cloſe this train of reaſoning reſpecting the ſubjects of Chriſtian baptiſm, by bringing into view, as briefly as

poſſible, the principal teſtimonies of the ancient fathers of the church relative to this matter.

But before I produce any thing of this kind, it ſeems neceſſary to anſwer an objection which has often been urged to preclude the force of all ſuch teſtimonies in determining the cauſe. It is objected that in proportion as we pay deference to the fathers, we detract from the ſufficiency of the ſcriptures as the rule of faith. The charge is a ſerious one. In anſwer to it, let it be obſerved, that we make a diſtinction between the doctrinal opinions of the fathers, and their teſtimony relative to matters of fact. In regard to the former, as they were uninſpired fallible, and ſometimes fanciful men, they were liable to miſtakes as well as we. We know that they did make many and great miſtakes. And therefore, as we have the ſame ſources of information in matters of doctrine which they had, we allow them in theſe no deciſive authority. But in reſpect to matters of fact as they were men of veracity, and had full opportunity of knowing thoſe facts, their teſtimony muſt be admitted and have its proper weight. It is only their teſtimony of this kind that I intend to uſe. The holy ſcriptures certainly contain every thing neceſſary to be believed in order to ſalvation. But it behoves us to uſe every means in our power to aſſiſt us in the interpretation of ſcripture. To this end, I venture to aſſert, few kinds of ſtudy are ſo uſeful as the ſtudy of eccleſiaſtical antiquity. And a proper attention to the diſtinction above mentioned, with a careful regard to the character of witneſſes to matters of fact, will in general be ſufficient to ſecure us from errour.

The conſequences of rejecting altogether the teſtimony of the fathers extend farther, probably, than the objector apprehends. How do we know that the ſeveral books of the New Teſtament were written by thoſe whoſe names they bear? Is it not by the teſtimony of the ancient fathers? And if we are obliged to rely on their teſtimony in a matter of ſo great importance, why ſhould it not be received in a caſe of leſs importance? Indeed the objection tends directly to the ſubjection of all hiſtory; for teſtimony is the very ſoul of hiſtory.

The teſtimony of the fathers eſtabliſhes two points reſpecting the baptiſm of children. The firſt is the early and univerſal practice of it. The ſecond is its derivation from the Apoſtles. I ſhall conſider each of theſe diſtinctly.

Of thoſe fathers whoſe works have come down to our times, Tertullian is the firſt who unequicocally mentions the

baptiſm of children. He flouriſhed about the cloſe of the ſecond century, that is, an hundred years after the age of the Apoſtles. He evidently ſpeaks of the baptiſm of children as a prevailing practice at that time. (37) It is true he diſſuades from it. But, beſides that he does not venture to condemn the practice as an unauthorized novelty, which omiſſion greatly diminiſhes the weight of his oppoſition, it will not be difficult to prove that it has no weight at all. An opinion appears to have ariſen very early in the church, that ſins committed after baptiſm could hardly be pardoned. Tertullian himſelf avows this opinion. (38) He ſays that there is but one repentance after baptiſm. On this ground it is that he recommends, very erroneouſly, as all agree, to delay the baptiſm even of adult diſciples in certain circumſtances, becauſe they are liable to ſtrong temptations to ſin. (39) Holding ſuch a principle, it is by no means ſtrange that he ſhould diſlike the baptizing of little children; and it is evident that ſuch oppoſition to it has no juſt claim to our regard.

Origen flouriſhed in the former part of the third century. His fame for extenſive knowledge has filled the world. His teſtimony that the baptiſm of children was the common practice of the church is expreſs and repeated. (40)

About the year of our Lord, 257, Cyprian ſat in coun-

37. Amongſt other things he ſays, "What is there that ſhould compel this innocent age to receive baptiſm? And ſince they are not yet allowed the diſpoſal of temporal goods, is it reaſonable that they ſhould be entruſted with the concerns of heaven?"

38. "God was willing that, though the gate of remiſſion was ſhut, and the grace of baptiſm refuſed forever to thoſe who had forfeited their baptiſmal innocence, they ſhould yet have one remedy left, which is a ſecond repentance; but that is granted to them but once."

39. "It is proper to make thoſe who are not married wait for ſome time, [before they be baptized,] by reaſon of the temptations which they have to undergo till they are married, or have attained to the gift of conſtancy."

40. "Let it be conſidered, ſays he, what the cauſe is, ſince the baptiſm of the church is given for the remiſſion of ſins, that baptiſm ſhould, according to the obſervance [or cuſtom] of the church, be given to little ones alſo." Again; "The church hath received tradition from the Apoſtles to give baptiſm to little ones alſo."

cil with ſixty-ſix other biſhops. To this council had been referred the queſtion, whether it were lawful to baptize children before the eighth day? Which queſtion was unanimouſly anſwered in the affirmative. Here we ſee clearly that the baptiſm of children was the practice of the church at that day; ſince in a ſolemn aſſembly of ſixty-ſeven biſhops and on a ſcrupulous queſtion relative to the time of baptizing children, not a doubt was ſtarted againſt their right in general to the ordinance.

But it is needleſs to multiply teſtimonies on this point. Our Baptiſt brethren acknowledge the fact, that the practice for which I contend was very early and extenſive, or rather univerſal, throughout the Chriſtian church. Nor can they produce one teſtimony to ſhow that it was an innovation. Now is it credible that it ſhould have been ſuch, and yet have gained, in ſo ſhort a time as an hundred years, ſo univerſal an eſtabliſhment, and all this without oppoſition? For as to Tertullian, is it conceivable that he ſhould weakly attempt to prove the inexpediency of baptizing children, if he could have aſſerted it to be a mere novelty of human invention? Had it been ſuch, muſt he not have known it? And would not this have been an argument infinitely more proper for the purpoſe of deſtroying its credit than the flimſy ones he has uſed? Yes, moſt certainly. It follows, therefore, that no ſuch thing could with truth be urged againſt the practice; in other words, that it was founded on the authority of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and handed down to the church by his Apoſtles.

This leads me to the other and moſt important point to be proved by the teſtimony of the Fathers.

Origin aſſerts expreſsly, that the church had received tradition from the Apoſtles to baptize little ones, as well as adults. [41]

Auguſtin, who flouriſhed about the cloſe of the fourth century, aſſerts ſubſtantially the ſame thing again and again. He ſays that the baptiſm of infants is a tradition of the univerſal church; [42] that it is founded on the higheſt autho-

41. See his teſtimony before cited, note 40.

42. "This, ſays he, is held as tradition by the univerſal church, when little children are baptized, who ſurely are not yet able to believe with the heart," &c.

rity; (43) that it cannot be doubted of. (44) And it is remarkable that one of the arguments which he urges moſt confidently againſt the Pelagians is derived from this practice. He proves that infants are ſubject to original ſin from their being baptized; for in thoſe days the principal end of baptiſm was ſuppoſed to be the removal of original ſin.—His adverſaries, though much preſſed and perplexed by the argument, could not deny the practice on which Auguſtin founded it, (45) which they doubtleſs could and would have done, had it been an innovation made after the days of the Apoſtles.

Auguſtin was preſent at the Milevitan council, held about the year of our Lord 440. This council declares, "that the doctrine of baptizing little children is ſuch as the catholick church, every where diffuſed, always underſtood and aſſerted."

Now theſe teſtimonies are made by men who had the beſt opportunities of knowing the truth of what they teſtify; and of whoſe veracity there is no reaſon to doubt. They prove the facts for which they are adduced, juſt as all other ancient facts are proved. We cannot, therefore, conſiſtently withhold our aſſent, without denying to teſtimony and hiſtory in general that credit which they have always juſtly poſſeſſed. And whereas it is ſometimes objected that many ſuperſtitious ceremonies crept into the Chriſtian church, even at a very early period, and therefore ſtand on the

43. "The doctrine itſelf [of baptizing infants] gives us no trouble, being long ſince founded in the catholick church by the higheſt authority." Speaking of Cyprian, and the decree before mentioned, Auguſtine ſays, "Bleſſed Cyprian, not making any new decree, but keeping the faith of the church moſt firm, decreed with a ſet number of his fellow biſhops, that a child new-born might be baptized."

44. "The queſtion between them [the Pelagians] and us, is not whether infants are to be baptized. Let no man make doubt of this; ſeeing neither do they doubt of this who contradict us in the other queſtion;" [that is, concerning the benefit of baptiſm.]

45. "They are repreſſed, ſays Auguſtine, by the authority of the church. For if they ſay that Chriſt profits not infants baptized, they plainly affirm that infants are ſuperfluouſly baptized. But this they dare not ſay."

ſame ground of ancient practice with infant-baptiſm; it is of importance to obſerve that the fathers do not aſſert of any of thoſe ceremonies that they were handed down from the Apoſtles. But of the baptiſm of children they do aſſert it; which remarkable diſtinction gives to the latter a decided ſuperiority. On the whole, theſe venerable teſtimonies of antiquity, ſo completely in our favour, add no little confirmation to the doctrine I have been labouring to eſtabliſh. And with them I cloſe this part of the controverſy.

I proceed now to the queſtion reſpecting the mode of Chriſtian baptiſm; which will require much leſs of our time than the former. I ſhall briefly offer the reaſons which induce me to believe that the law of the ordinance enjoins only the religious application of water, leaving the mode of applying it indifferent and diſcretionary.

By examining the New Teſtament we find that the great ſignificant deſign of baptiſm is to repreſent, by the uſe of water, the purification of the ſoul from ſin. This is often inculcated in the writings both of the Evangeliſts and the Apoſtles. I ſhall give two or three inſtances. *Arise*, ſaid Ananias *to Saul, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.* (46) The Apoſtle Peter, making a compariſon between the ancient flood and Chriſtian baptiſm, declares that *baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God.* (47) Again; *He saved us*, ſays the Apoſtle Paul, *by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.* (48) This being the ſignificant meaning of baptiſm, we find the ordinance commonly alluded to under the general term of *washing*. Sometimes perhaps it is alluded to under the notion of immerſion. (49) It is remarkable alſo that the ſpiritual cleanſing repreſented by baptiſm is ſaid to be effected by *the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*; (50)

46. Acts xxii. 16. | 47. 1 Pet. iii. 21. | 48. Tit. iii. 5.

49. *Buried with Christ by or in baptism.*—Rom. vi 4 Col. ii. 12. I ſay *perhaps* immerſion is here alluded to; for it really is by no means certain.

50. 1 Peter i. 2. *Elect according to the fore knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.*

and Chriſtians are ſaid *to have their hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience.* (51) From all which it ſeems reaſonable to conclude that it is ſimply the application of water, and not the quantity, nor any particular mode of applying it, which was intended to repreſent the purifying of the ſoul from ſin; and conſequently that no particular mode is excluſively enjoined as eſſential to the ordinance.

But we muſt attend to the word baptiſm itſelf. *Baptize* and *baptism* are merely Greek words with Engliſh terminations; the latter of which is formed from the former. We may obſerve, that the verb, *to baptize*, and its derivatives, are uniformly uſed in the New Teſtament to expreſs ſome application of water with a religious view, except where they are figuratively applied to things of a ſpiritual nature. They never expreſs there any common uſe of water; as will be evident to any one who makes the inveſtigation.— The word being thus evidently limited in its ſcriptural application, our buſineſs is ſimply to aſcertain what it means when uſed in the New Teſtament, without regard to its application in profane authors. Indeed this laſt is an ultimate reſort in the explication of ſcriptural language, and is only to be adopted when all other methods fail.

Now we ſhall find, by a careful examination of this point, that the word has a general ſignification, comprehending various modes of applying water. We are informed by the Evangeliſt Matthew, that *the Scribes and Phariſees came to Jeſus, ſaying, Why do thy diſciples tranſgreſs the tradition of the elders? For they waſh not their hands when they eat bread.* (52) But when Luke tells us that *the Phariſee marvelled that Jeſus had not firſt waſhed before dinner*, he uſes a different word. Had uniformity been preſerved in our verſion, if in this inſtance it can be called a verſion, we ſhould have heard this Evangeliſt ſay, the Phariſee marvelled that our Lord *had not been baptized* before dinner. [53] It is evident that the two paſſages refer to the ſame cuſtom; and conſequently that the words *waſh* and *baptize* are uſed ſynonimouſly. The certainty of this appears to have led

51. Heb. x. 22. *Let us draw near with a true heart, in full aſſurance of faith, having our hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, and our bodies waſhed with pure water.*

52. Mat. xv. 1 2.

53. Luke xi. 38. *Oti ou proton ebaptisthe.* See alſo Mark vii. 3 4, in the original.

our tranſlators to render the two original words by the ſame word in our language. [54]

But there is one text to this purpoſe which deſerves particular attention; and appears to me perfectly deciſive of the point. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the Jewiſh ritual ſays that *it conſisted in meats and drinks and divers waſhings.*— According to the original, it is, *divers baptisms*; or rather, *different, various baptisms.* [55] Under this expreſſion are evidently included all the ceremonial purifications preſcribed by the Moſaick law, whether by water, or blood, or mixed fluids. Now by attending to thoſe purifications, we find that ſome of them were performed by ſprinkling, others by waſhing in the uſual way, and others by immerſing or bathing the body. [56] Nay, the Apoſtle himſelf, in the context, ſhews that ſprinkling is included in his *various baptisms. For if*, ſays he, *the blood of bulls and of goats, and the aſhes of an heifer, ſprinkling the unclean, ſanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt &c.* And again; *he*, Moſes, *took the blood of calves*, &c. *and ſprinkled both the book and all the people. Moreover, he ſprinkled likewiſe with blood both the tabernacle, and all the veſſels of the miniſtry.* Hence then I derive, a complete proof that any application of water, together with the other requiſites enjoined, conſtitutes a true baptiſm, according to the language of the New Teſtament. And what right have our Baptiſt brethren to ſet up a new and different vocabulary of their own upon this ſubject; It appears, therefore, both from the ſcriptural meaning of the ordinance and from the ſcriptural uſe of the word, that the mode of applying water in baptiſm is a matter of indifference. And as our Lord has thus left us at liberty, we will not, nay we dare not, ſubject ourſelves to bondage in this matter.

I muſt alſo aſk our brethren what they think of the baptiſm of tables, or as it ought to be rendered, *of beds*, which

54. Dr. Campbell, who concedes to the Baptiſts more, I think, in regard to immerſion, than truth will warrant, tranſlates Luke's original quoted in the laſt note, *The Phariſee was ſurpriſed to obſerve that he used no waſhing before dinner.*

55. Heb. ix. 10. *Diaphorois baptismois.*

56. See the Moſaick ceremonial law generally.

we are informed the Jews held and practiſed? (57) Did they immerſe theſe in water? It is in the higheſt degree improbable that they did. And this confirms my poſition that the word BAPTISM is uſed in the New-Teſtament with a great extent of ſignification.

But it is ſaid that the Apoſtles baptized by immerſion, and that we are bound by their example. It may be that they did in ſome inſtances; but I do not know how it can be infallibly proved. There are inſtances in which their having uſed immerſion is highly improbable. How could the Apoſtles immerſe three thouſand in one day, or rather part of a day, whom the hiſtory implies to have been baptized? (58) Can it be ſuppoſed that the jailor and his houſehold went at midnight to a place convenient for immerſion? Eſpecially when we find that Paul and Silas poſitively refuſed to leave the priſon next morning until they were publickly diſmiſſed by the magiſtrates. (59) Theſe things our brethren find great difficulties in explaining; difficulties which our doctrine at once removes, and which cannot be removed, ſo far as I can ſee, in any other way. Again; while the Apoſtle Peter was preaching to Cornelius and his friends, *the Holy Ghoſt fell on all them who heard the word. Then ſaid Peter, Can any man forbid water, that theſe ſhould not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghoſt as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.* [60] Does not this form of ſpeaking clearly imply that water was to be brought for the baptiſm of theſe converts? Muſt not the Apoſtle have uſed a different phraſeology, had he intended that they ſhould leave the houſe, and go to a place convenient for immerſion? Let the candid reader judge. It is moreover well worthy of remark, that

57. Mark vii. 4—*Baptimus — klinon: Baptisms of beds.* Campbell.

58. Acts ii. 41—"The ſame day there were added unto them about three thouſand ſouls."

59. Acts xvi 37.—"But Paul ſaid unto them, they have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have caſt us into priſon, and now do they thruſt us out privily? Nay, verily, but let them come themſelves and fetch us out." verſe 39. "And they came and beſought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city."

60. Acts x. 44, 47.

there is not an inſtance in the New Teſtament of any perſon removing from the place where he made his profeſſion of faith, in order to be baptized.

It does appear from eccleſiaſtical hiſtory that baptiſm was commonly adminiſtered by immerſion in the early ages of the church. And this renders it likely that it was ſometimes ſo adminiſtered by the Apoſtles. But if they did uſe immerſion, I cannot admit the concluſion which our Baptiſt brethren draw from it. The Apoſtles had good reaſons, doubtleſs, for immerſing their diſciples, if they did immerſe them: but this does not prove that they conſidered it eſſential to the ordinance, or deſigned to abridge the liberty of Chriſtians in this matter. Their own writings, already cited, reſpecting the ſpiritual ſignification of baptiſm, and their uſe of the word, prove that the ordinance is rightly adminiſtered by the application of water in any way. And their practice renders it next to abſolutely certain that they did not always uſe immerſion. They may have baptized by immerſion ſometimes, merely in condeſcenſion to the prejudices of the early converts; as moſt Pedobaptiſts, I ſuppoſe, would do now, if occaſion required. Thus we find the Apoſtle Paul circumciſing Timothy becauſe of the Jews(61) though no man ſuppoſes this example to be binding on Chriſtians. This Apoſtle himſelf warmly oppoſed thoſe who taught that circumciſion was neceſſary to ſalvation (62).

While our brethren plead Apoſtolic example ſo ſtrenouſly in regard to the circumſtantials of poſitive inſtitutions, why do they not confine themſelves to unleavened bread in the Lord's ſupper; as it is certain our Lord and his Apoſtles did at the time of its inſtitution? [63] Why do they not alſo partake of the Lord's ſupper reclining upon couches? For this was certainly the poſture originally uſed; and was

61. Acts xvi. 3.—"Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him, becauſe of the Jews who were in thoſe quarters: for they knew all that his Father was a Greek."

62. Gal. v. 6—"For in Jeſus Chriſt neither circumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion; but faith which worketh by love."

63. Such was the law of the paſſover, Exod. xii. 8. "They ſhall eat the fleſh in that night roaſt with fire, and unleavened bread."

the common poſture of the ancients at all their meals. If our baptiſm be an imitation of that of Chriſt, why do not our brethren take care to adminiſter it only to ſuch ſubjects as are about thirty years of age, as our Lord was at the time when John baptized him? (64) Theſe circumſtances appear, for ought that I can learn, to be of as much importance as the particular mode of baptiſm. In other words, neither is at all eſſential to be obſerved.

As we hear ſo much from our brethren about the neceſſity of following our Lord into the water, I cannot help obſerving, by the way, that his baptiſm was quite a ſingular caſe, except merely as to the external action. He could not be baptized *unto repentance*; for his innocence made repentance impoſſible to him. It was not the baptiſm of the Chriſtian church, *that* not being inſtituted until after our Lord's reſurrection, and by the commiſſion cited at the head of this diſcourſe. Many circumſtances evince that John's was not the Chriſtian baptiſm; particularly this, that the Apoſtle Paul, having found ſome diſciples who had received only John's baptiſm, required them to be baptized again, with the Chriſtian baptiſm; and accordingly, *they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.* [65.]

Finally, the queſtion between our Baptiſt brethren and us is not whether immerſion be a lawful mode of baptiſm, for this we readily allow; but whether it be abſolutely neceſſary, ſo that there can be no valid baptiſm without it? The latter is their opinion. But I preſume it has been ſufficiently proved that the mode of applying water in baptiſm is left free, as one of thoſe diſcretionary circumſtantials which are found, more or leſs, to attend all poſitive inſtitutions.

It is time now that we haſten to a concluſion.

I am ſenſible how difficult it is to remove opinions which have long been fixed in the mind; and more eſpecially,

64. Luke iii. 23—Immediately after our Lord's baptiſm, the Evangeliſt informs us, "that Jeſus began to be about thirty years of age."

65. Acts xix. 1 —— 5—As to the deſign of our Lord's being baptized by John, I believe the beſt light may be obtained by ſtudying Exod. xxix 4. Num. iv. 3, 47. Compared with Matt. iii. 15; and Luke iii. 21, 22, 23. Which I leave the intelligent reader to conſult for himſelf.

when thoſe opinions are made a term of religious diſtinction. Many are the volumes which have been written on this controverſy. The powers of genius and learning have been exhauſted in it; but few have been brought over from that ſide to which they had at firſt attached themſelves.—The demand for expreſs precept or example in favour of houſehold baptiſm, as we hold it, is ſtill obſtinately urged by thoſe who oppoſe us. Our principal arguments are not ſtrictly of this kind; and therefore make but little impreſſion on the minds of our brethren. To them I can only farther ſay, that we ſincerely love them as fellow-diſciples of our common Redeemer; that in regard to this controverſy, we deſire only a fair hearing; that we truſt they as well as we are conſcientiouſly ſeeking for the truth; and truth, we doubt not, will finally prevail.

If any are brought to doubt the validity of their baptiſm in infancy, it is ſurely a reaſonable advice and requeſt that they be not precipitate in forming a concluſion againſt it. They ought carefully to diſtinguiſh for themſelves between ſuch doubts, and the being ſatisfied on the other ſide. Independently of the arguments advanced in the cauſe, modeſty certainly becomes us in our inquiries; ſince this doctrine has, through ſo many ages, been believed and acted upon by ſo many eminently wiſe and godly men. To ſuch perſons as I am now addreſſing, I have only to recommend a patient examination of the ſcriptures upon the ſubject, with earneſt prayer to God for light and inſtruction.

To thoſe who believe the doctrine I have been maintaining, I ſhall offer a few reflections, by way of improvement.

We have already ſeen that baptiſm, in its moſt comprehenſive view, repreſents the purification of the ſoul from ſin. It is ſuited, therefore, to promote piety in the ſoul, by calling to our remembrance the moſt important doctrines of our holy religion. It ſuggeſts ſtrongly the depravity, the moral pollution of our nature; the unſpeakable love of God in providing the means of deliverance; the almighty efficacy of the blood of Chriſt, ſhed for our redemption, and applied by the renewing and ſanctifying agency of the Holy Spirit. Such are the objects ſenſibly repreſented in Chriſtian baptiſm, and which ought to fill our minds when we contemplate the ordinance: an exerciſe fitted to excite in us the deepeſt humility, the moſt fervent love and gratitude to God, the livelieſt joy in believing; in ſhort, every holy affection and temper which enters into the compoſition of the Chriſtian character.

In ſubordination to this general view, we alſo find that baptiſm is made the ſtanding mode of admiſſion into the viſible church. The Apoſtolick commiſſion itſelf ſuggeſts this; and it is elſewhere ſtill more expreſsly inculcated.— *We are all baptized*, ſays the Apoſtle, *into one body*; (66) that is, into the church of Chriſt. Again; *As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ;* (67) that is, have put on the Chriſtian name and profeſſion.— Ordinarily, therefore, no perſon is to be conſidered a member of Chriſt's viſible church, until he be introduced and dedicated to God by baptiſm, according to his appointment.

Now the church may properly be conſidered as a ſchool of religious inſtruction. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is by his Spirit the ſupreme Teacher; and all the members are his diſciples or ſcholars. Earthly teachers alſo are appointed to adminiſter the word, for the inſtruction of the diſciples in the knowledge of divine truth. The diſciples make various proficiency in this heavenly ſtudy. Some have learned but little; others are farther advanced. But it is enjoined on all to attend to the means appointed, that they may continually *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* (68) Into this ſacred ſchool believers are, by a gracious conſtitution, permitted and required to have their children entered, to the end that they alſo may partake of the means of grace, and learn the things which belong to their everlaſting peace.

When, therefore, you preſent your children to baptiſm, you publickly dedicate them to the teaching and authority of the Redeemer; ſolemnly recogniſing your obligations on their behalf. And it becomes you moſt ſeriouſly to conſider the duties incumbent upon you in regard to them.— You are naturally appointed the firſt guardians and inſtructors of your children; and you are indiſpenſibly bound to guide them, as far as in you lies, in obedience to the commandments of God. This was again and again enjoined on the ancient people of God: and you are equally commanded at this day to *bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* (69)

66. 1 Cor. xii. 13.
67. Gal. iii. 17.
68. 2 Pet. iii. 18.
69. Eph. vi. 4.

As your taſk is an arduous one, and calls for your utmoſt exertions, ſo you have high encouragements to animate you in the performance of it. *Train up a child*, ſays the wiſe man, *in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* (70) Common experience ſtill confirms the general truth of this maxim. We all know how great is the ſtrength and efficacy of early religious impreſſions.—God often bleſſes them, ſo as to cauſe the good ſeed thus early ſown to bring forth, ſooner or later, the ripe fruits of holineſs and ſalvation. In proportion as the religious education of children is attended to, we commonly ſee true piety flouriſh and abound; as, on the other hand, the neglect of ſuch education is one of the moſt fruitful ſources of vice and irreligion. Let chriſtian parents, therefore, be vigilant and perſevering in this good work. Reſtrain your children from ſin. Teach them diligently the way of life. Pray to God for a bleſſing on your labours; and enjoy the pleaſing hope ſet before you that they ſhall not be in vain.

To the children who have been thus brought into the ſchool of Chriſt by baptiſm I muſt obſerve, that you are highly privileged indeed. The church generally, and your parents in particular, are ſolemnly engaged in watching over you, and teaching you the way of ſalvation. Be perſuaded then to liſten to inſtruction, and to *remember your Creator in the days of your youth.* (71) Conſider the obligations you are under, and the awful account you have to render to God for the improvement you make of your diſtinguiſhed privileges. By the order of Chriſt you have been received as his viſible diſciples. But this will be of no advantage to you; the prayers, the labours of your pious parents and of the church will increaſe your guilt and condemnation at the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt; if you neglect to become his diſciples in heart as well as in name. Let religion then be the object of your firſt concern, your moſt ardent purſuit. Seek the favour of God above all things; and never forget that *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.* (72)

When ſhall thoſe happy days arrive, that we ſhall ſee parents ſteadily employed in promoting family piety; like faithful Abraham, ſtrictly *commanding their children and*

70 Prov. xxii. 6.
71 Eccl. xii. 1.
72 Ps. cxi. 10.

their households after them to keep the way of the Lord? (73) When ſhall we ſee children univerſally and eagerly inquiring for the road to Zion, humble and docile in learning their duty, and growing in piety and devotion to God as they grow in years? How different will the face of things then be from what it is at preſent! It will be heaven begun upon earth! Such events we hope for; and are comforted, in all our troubles, by looking forward to that bleſſed period when *the earth ſhall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the ſea*; (74) and when *all the ends of the earth ſhall ſee the ſalvation of our God.* (75)

☞ The preceding piece is ſo long that the Editors would have divided it, could that have been done without breaking the connection, ſo as to leſſen the force of the reaſoning. But as a diviſion could not take place without injury to the piece itſelf, we truſt our readers will be beſt pleaſed to ſee it entire. Our own opinion of the merits of the eſſay is ſuch, that we would have been extremely unwilling to do any thing which might diminiſh its value.

THE EDITORS.

For the Virginia Religious Magazine.

MIDNIGHT THOUGHTS.

THE darkneſs and ſilenceof night ſurround me. The world is buried in the inſenſibility of ſleep; except the votaries of diſſipation who turn night into day by their revels, and the children of affliction whom ſorrow deprives of reſt.—Except alſo a few others who love to ſpend this midnight hour in penſive meditation, calling to remembrance days that are paſt, muſing on abſent objects of affection, or building airy ſchemes of happineſs which may perhaps never be realized.

Let me alſo take an excurſion of ſerious thought. Let me bring my paſt life into review; and aſk, what degree of happineſs has the world hitherto afforded me?

73 Gen. xviii. 19.
74 Iſa. xi. 9
75 Iſa. lii. 10.

As to the period of childhood, I am very prone to conſider it a period of entire enjoyment, a continued courſe of pleaſures unmingled with the anxieties of riper years. But ſober reaſon and obſervation, yea memory itſelf, when I carefully exerciſe it, convinces me that this is nothing but a bright illuſion of the imagination. At that age we are comparatively very incapable either of pleaſure or pain.— Neither extends far beyond mere ſenſation; ſince the underſtanding is almoſt a ſtranger to the light of truth, and the heart to the ſweetneſs of affection. Yet, ſuch as they are, childhood has its pains as well as its pleaſures; and they are mingled and proportioned to each other very nearly as in the other ſtages of life. But did the imagination paint thoſe days juſtly; were they as free from ſorrow and as full of delight as it repreſents them; they are now fled forever: and there is as much pain as pleaſure in the remembrance of them.

And what better have I found in the progreſs of youth? Alas, youth as well as childhood is vanity. My deſires and wiſhes have increaſed much more than my gratifications. I would not undervalue the gifts of an indulgent Providence; but thoſe very gifts have frequently proved occaſions of uneaſineſs. Moſt of the years of my youth were devoted to ſtudy. Such a life is by no means without its ſatisfactions; but they are ſcanty indeed when regarded as an ultimate reſource. For as a conſciouſneſs of ignorance is exceedingly diſquieting to him who thirſts for knowledge, it is no leſs true on the other hand that he who encreaſeth knowledge increaſeth ſorrow. Let me turn to pleaſures of the heart. God has given me affectionate and uſeful friends: precious bleſſings indeed! But where are they now? The grave contains ſome; I have been from time to time ſeperated from the reſt: and the more we loved each other, the more keenly has ſeperation afflicted us. I retain all my affection for them; but I enjoy not their ſociety, and can ſeldom even hear how they proſper. As to mankind at large, I have accuſtomed myſelf to expect but little kindneſs from them, and have found ſtill leſs. With the exception of a few gentle and generous ſpirits, I have found that every man liveth to himſelf. Each is too buſy with his own concerns to attend much to the happineſs of others.

Does the world afford me happineſs at the preſent time? Ah no! My heart too ſenſibly feels its wants to be at eaſe. I ſee comforts which I think would be great indeed, but I cannot reach them: and deſire ungratified is pain. How

perverſely do I often overlook and forget the gifts of a bountiful Providence which I poſſeſs, in the eager purſuit after ſomething more! In fine, the paſt, whatever it was, is fled. The preſent is far from ſatisfactory. I muſt betake myſelf therefore to the future, the common refuge of the uneaſy heart of man

Sweet hope! Thou ſoother of the anxious ſoul! I obſerve thy ſparkling eye, and the ſprightly ſpread of thy wings.—But let caution attend thy flight. Many conſiderations are ready to check thy ſoaring confidence. How liable are we to miſtake in our judgment of the things which would conduce to our happineſs! How often does our ſhort ſight deceive us with vain appearences! Very often does the heart run before the underſtanding in graſping its favourite objects. Too late we fine our errour, and lament that we have embraced miſery inſtead of bliſs. But I diſmiſs this fear. Suppoſe my judgment to be completely correct concerning the objects of purſuit; yet how precarious and uncertain is the attainment. How often does fond and ſanguine expectation come back pale with diſappointment, and blaſt the gay viſions of years in a moment! But ſuppoſe I diſmiſs this fear alſo: ſtill how unſtable, how fleeting is the poſſeſſion of earthly good! Every thing below the ſkies is liable to change. The higheſt triumph of joy may be quickly turned into tears, and treaſures of bliſs deſtroyed by one afflictive ſtroke. Finally the ſoul of man is naturally formed for the knowledge and and enjoyment of boundleſs perfection. This earth, with all her furniture, is too little to ſatiſfy its deſires: and poor are her richeſt pleaſures, unleſs they be connected with and ſubordinated to the hope of an infinite and everlaſting inheritance.

The world then cannot make me happy. Do I take pleaſure in giving myſelf gloomy views of human life? I think not. Theſe ſeem to be the dictates of experience, and the concluſions of ſober reaſon. If I pronounce myſelf to be in the midſt of a ſcene of ſorrow, it is that I may be prompted to ſeek true felicity where it may aſſuredly be found. And where ſhall I find it? I look around with earneſt enquiry. O that I could lay this weary head upon the boſom of unfailing love! And why may I not? I behold that bleſſed retreat where the mourner finds repoſe. Contemplate it O my ſoul, with reverence, wonder, and gratitude. It is *the boſom of God!* The Son of God who dwells ever in the boſom of the Father reveals that dear refuge, and bids me come. In tears and in blood our Immanuel hath toiled and

ſuffered to make it acceſſible to me a ſinner. Thither will I reſort; there will I caſt my cares, and there ſhall I find my happineſs.

'Father of mercies! Inexhauſtible Source of all good! Giver of all conſolation! I come unto thee guilty for pardon through Jeſus thy Son, in whom thou art ever well pleaſed. I come to thee ſinful for ſanctification by thy Holy Spirit. Spurn me not from thee, O Lord, though I have tranſgreſſed againſt thee. I come to thee needy and helpleſs, weary and heavy laden, for peace and reſt. O take me to thyſelf, though moſt unworthy, as a child to the boſom of a tender parent. The precious promiſes of thy goſpel are abundantly ſufficient for my wants; I embrace them, and caſt my ſoul and my body on thy care. Shed abroad thy love in my heart, and ſuſtain me by thy grace. Redeem me by thy mighty power from the vanities of this poor world.—Give me the victory over its enſnaring temptations. Support my ſoul from ſinking under its troubles, by the exerciſe of that faith which layeth hold on inviſible eternal objects; by that hope which, as an anchor of the ſoul both ſure and ſtedfaſt, entereth into the things within the vail. O train me up in the way of holineſs, and bring me at length to thy kingdom of glory, thy everlaſting reſt Amen.'

PHILANDER.

For the Virginia Religious Magazine.

THE ROSE.

JULIA, this bluſhing flow'r receive,
The ſweeteſt May herſelf can give,
Adorn'd with all her niceſt care,
A lively emblem of the fair.
The roſe will fade, it haſtes to die,
And ſoon muſt ceaſe to pleaſe the eye;
So, Julia, muſt thy youthful bloom
Submit to time's ungentle doom:
The charms of that enchanting face,
Thy mein, and ev'ry nameleſs grace,
Reſiſtleſs age will ſoon aſſail,
And all the light of beauty fail.
The roſe muſt fade, but ſtill can boaſt
Its grateful fragrance is not loſt;
So, Julia, though the hand of time

Deſtroy thy lovely youthful prime,
The brighter beauties of thy mind
Shall not be loſt, but more refin'd :
Thy ſprightly ſenſe, thy feeling heart,
Thy manners free from tinſel art,
Thy love to virtue's ſacred cauſe,
Thy ſtrict regard to all her laws,
Thy cheerful air and ſmile ſerene
In which the peace of heav'n is ſeen ;
Theſe charms ſhall ſtill, as now, controul
Thy own Philander's faithful ſoul.

For the Virginia Religious Magazine.

THE HAPPINESS OF EARLY RELIGION.

1. Happy the youth whoſe heart prefers
Religion's heav'nly road ;
Who gives his beſt, his earlieſt years
To wiſdom and to God.
2. Supported by Almighty Love
His ſoul no terrour knows :
Onward his ſteady footſteps move
Through hoſts of envious foes.
3. In vain the world with countleſs wiles
Exerts her treach'rous art ;
Firm faith from all her threats and ſmiles
Securely guards his heart.
4. Of light and ſtrength from day to day
He gains a freſh ſupply ;
Unwearied runs in virtue's way
To win the prize on high.
5. No guilty fear nor bluſhing ſhame
Diſturbs his ſacred reſt :
Honour and praiſe attend his name,
And gladneſs fills his breaſt.
6. Thus bleſt he lives, and when he dies
Death is his richeſt gain :
Well pleas'd he yields his breath, and flies
With Chriſt his Lord to reign.

Philander.

Samuel Walkup Printer.